



DAREDEVIL

THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR

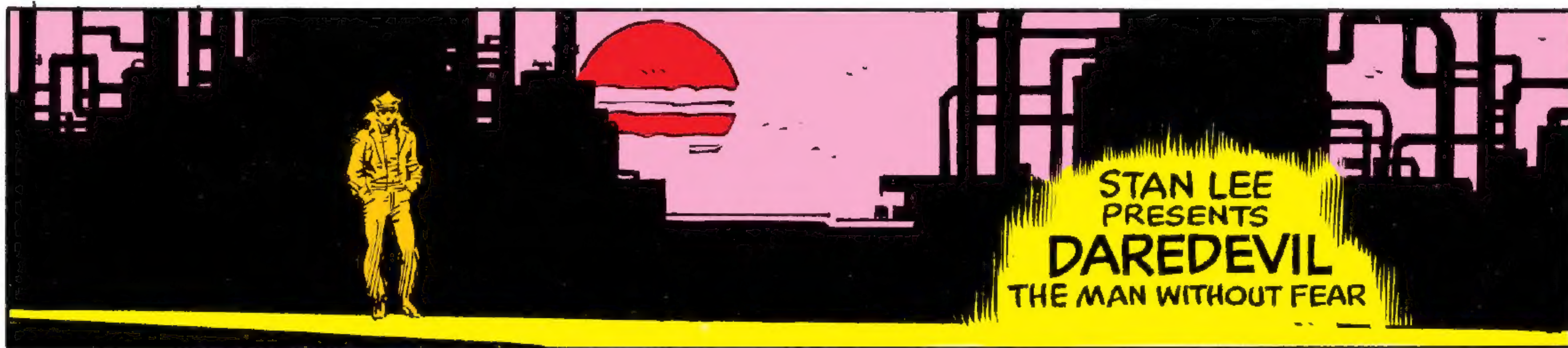
65¢
219
JUNE
© 02459

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

WE GOT A
NASTY, ROTTEN
LITTLE TOWN
HERE,
STRANGER...

...AND WE
AIM TO *KEEP*
IT THAT WAY!





BADLANDS

BY FRANK MILLER*, JOHN BUSCEMA & GERRY TALAOC

CHRISTIE SCHEELER
COLORS
JOE ROSEN
LETTERS
RALPH MACCHIO
EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

KILL YOU
I'LL KILL YOU
I SWEAR--

POPPA'S
OLYMPIAN PALACE

BROKEN CROSS IS A BLEARY-EYED, COTTON-MOUTHED HANG OVER OF A TOWN. IT'S CURLED UP LIKE A WINO OFF A SHUT-DOWN EXIT OF THE NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE, IN THE SHADOW OF AN OIL-BLACK REFINERY THAT COUGHS OIL-BLACK SMOKE INTO THE BOURBON NEW JERSEY SKY.

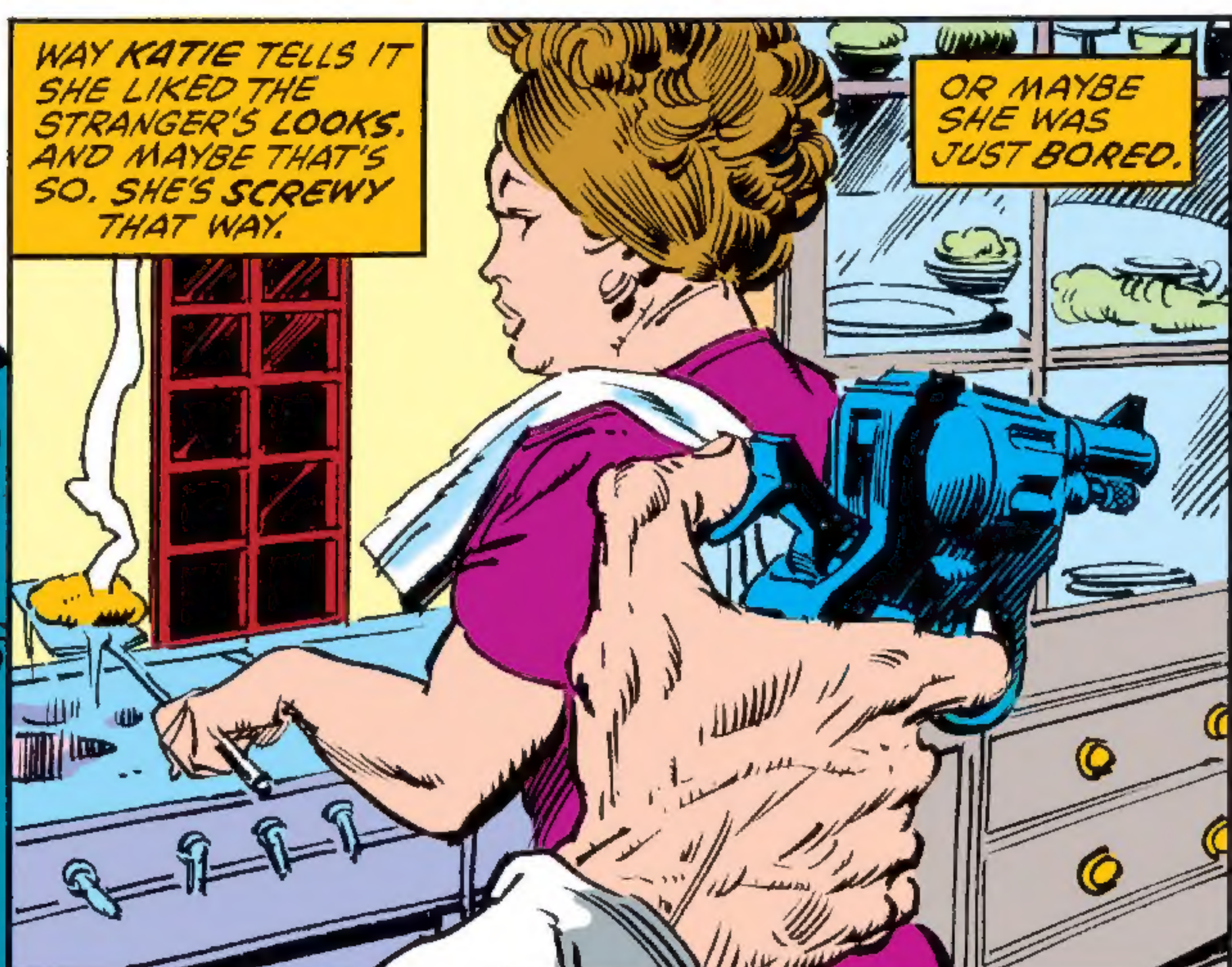
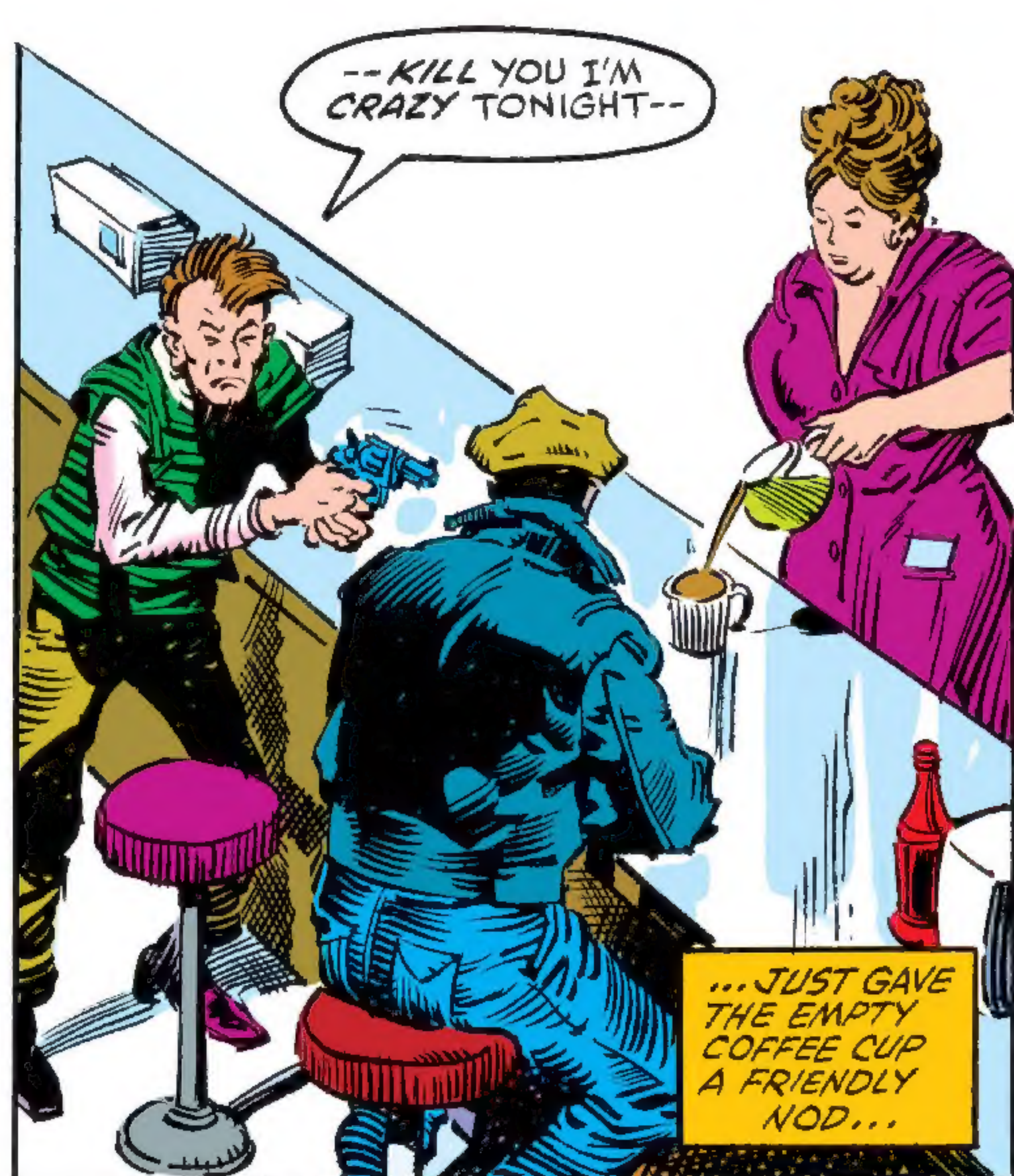
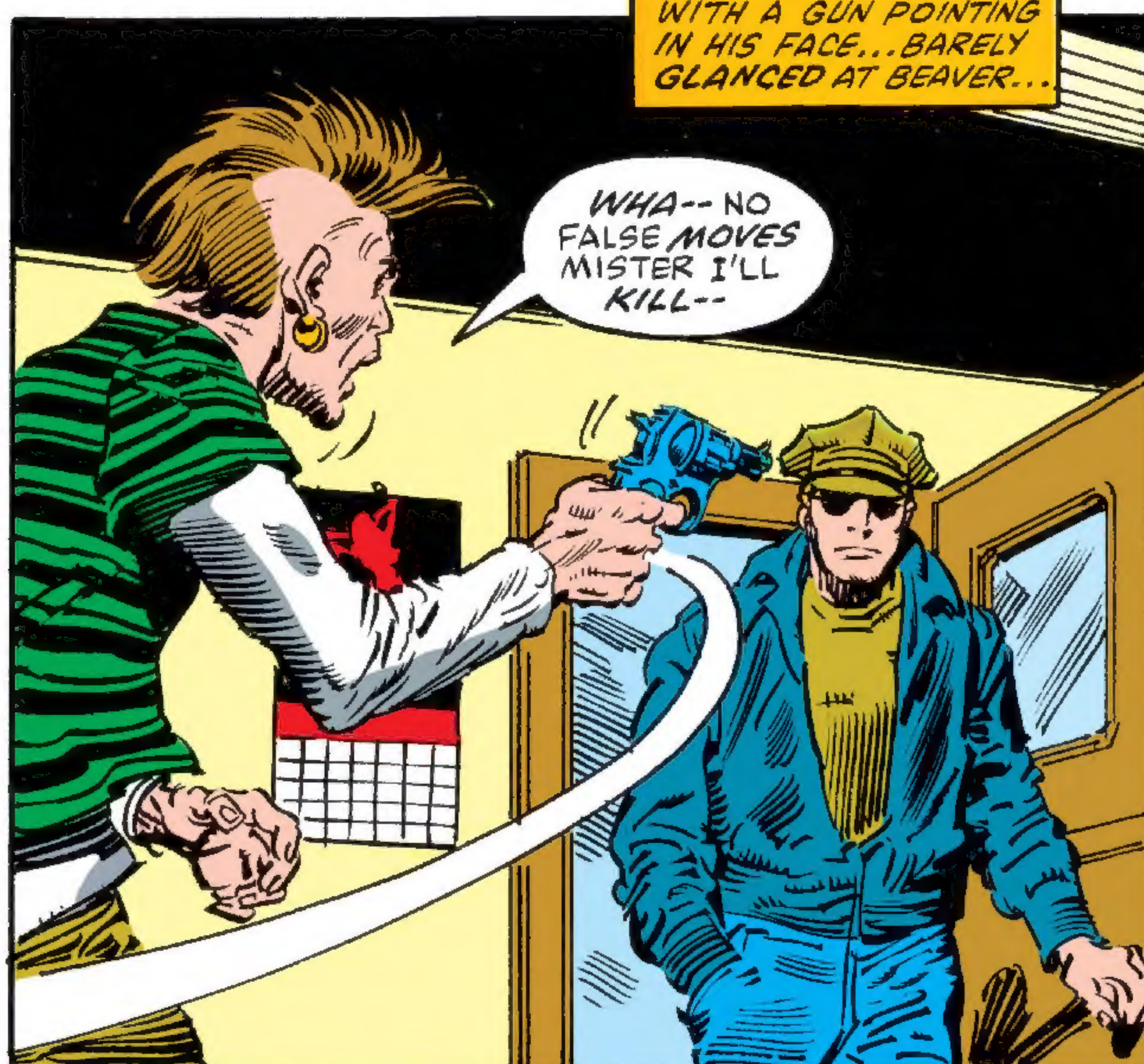
THE REFINERY HAD LET OUT ITS NIGHTLY DEATH RATTLE AND AN OVER-COOKED SUN WAS SURRENDERING TO THE SMOKE AND THE DIESEL FUMES WHEN THE STRANGER CAME WALKING.

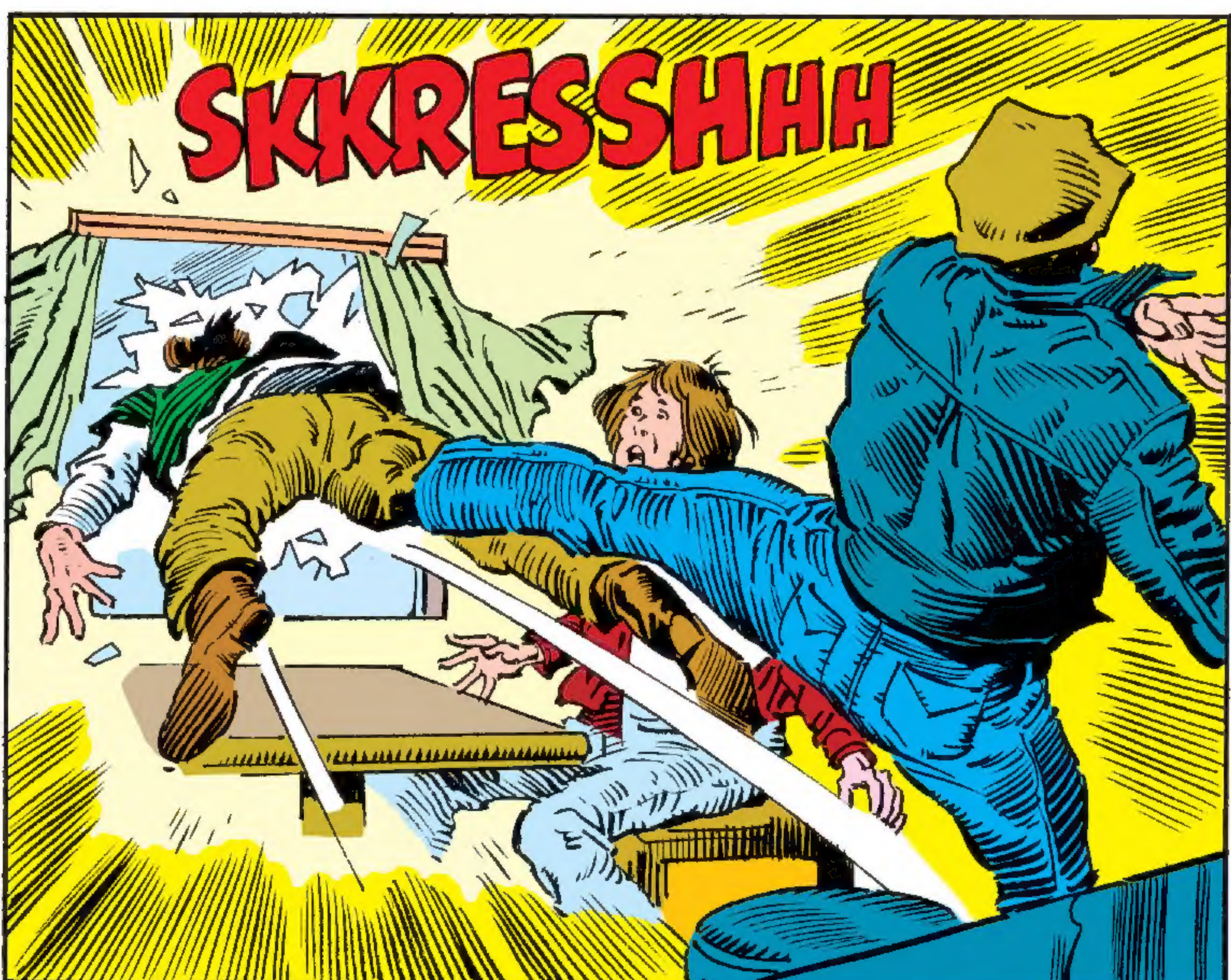
THAT'S RIGHT. HE WALKED. IN NEW JERSEY HE WALKED. WITH AN EASY CONFIDENCE BROKEN CROSS HADN'T SEEN SINCE...

... BUT THAT'S ANOTHER STORY.

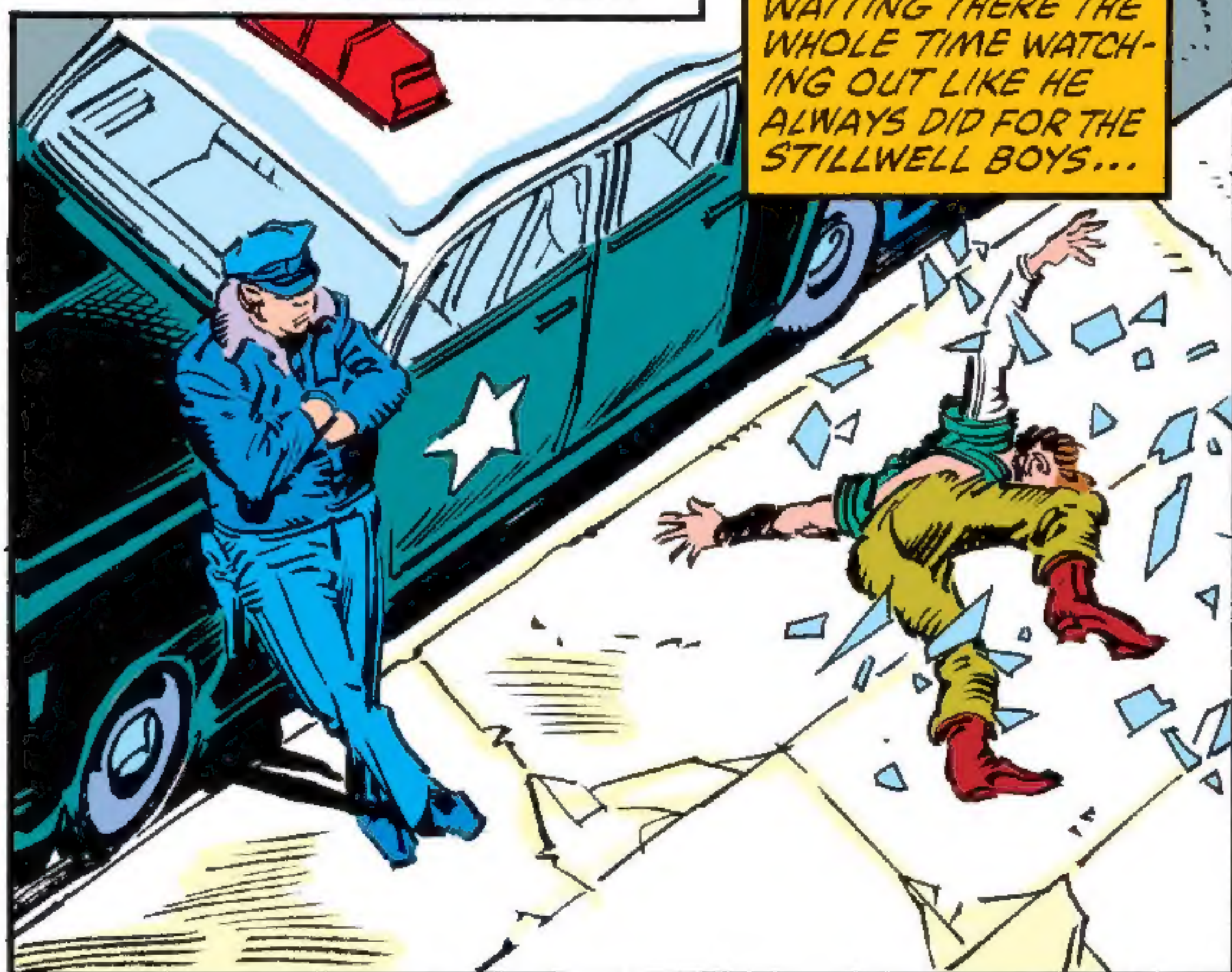


THEN IN HE CAME, LIKE HE WAS BORN WITH A GUN POINTING IN HIS FACE... BARELY GLANCED AT BEAVER...



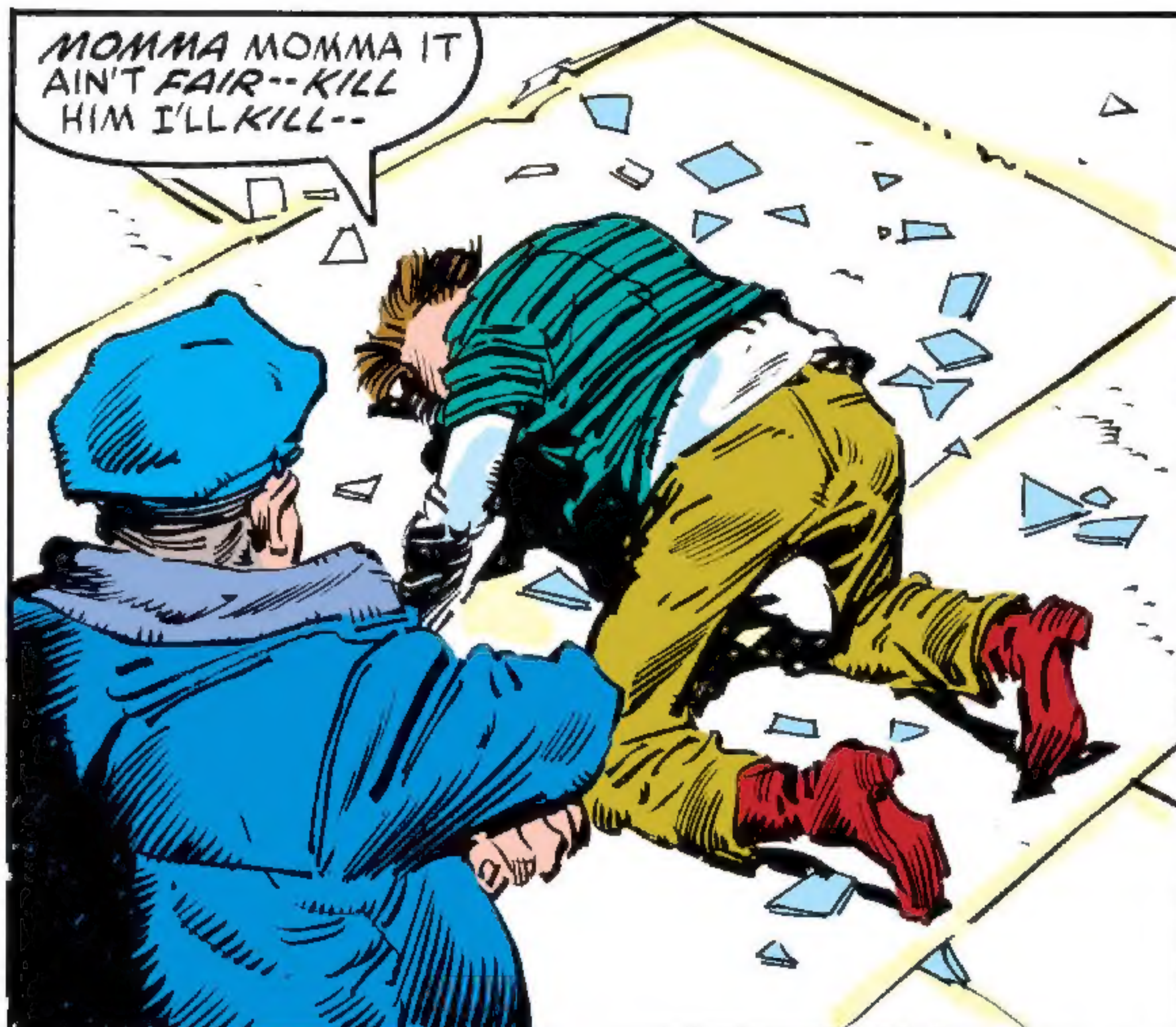


BEAVER RATTLED OUT INTO THE LOT LIKE A BROKEN MUFFLER, RIGHT TO LT. COSTELLO'S FEET.

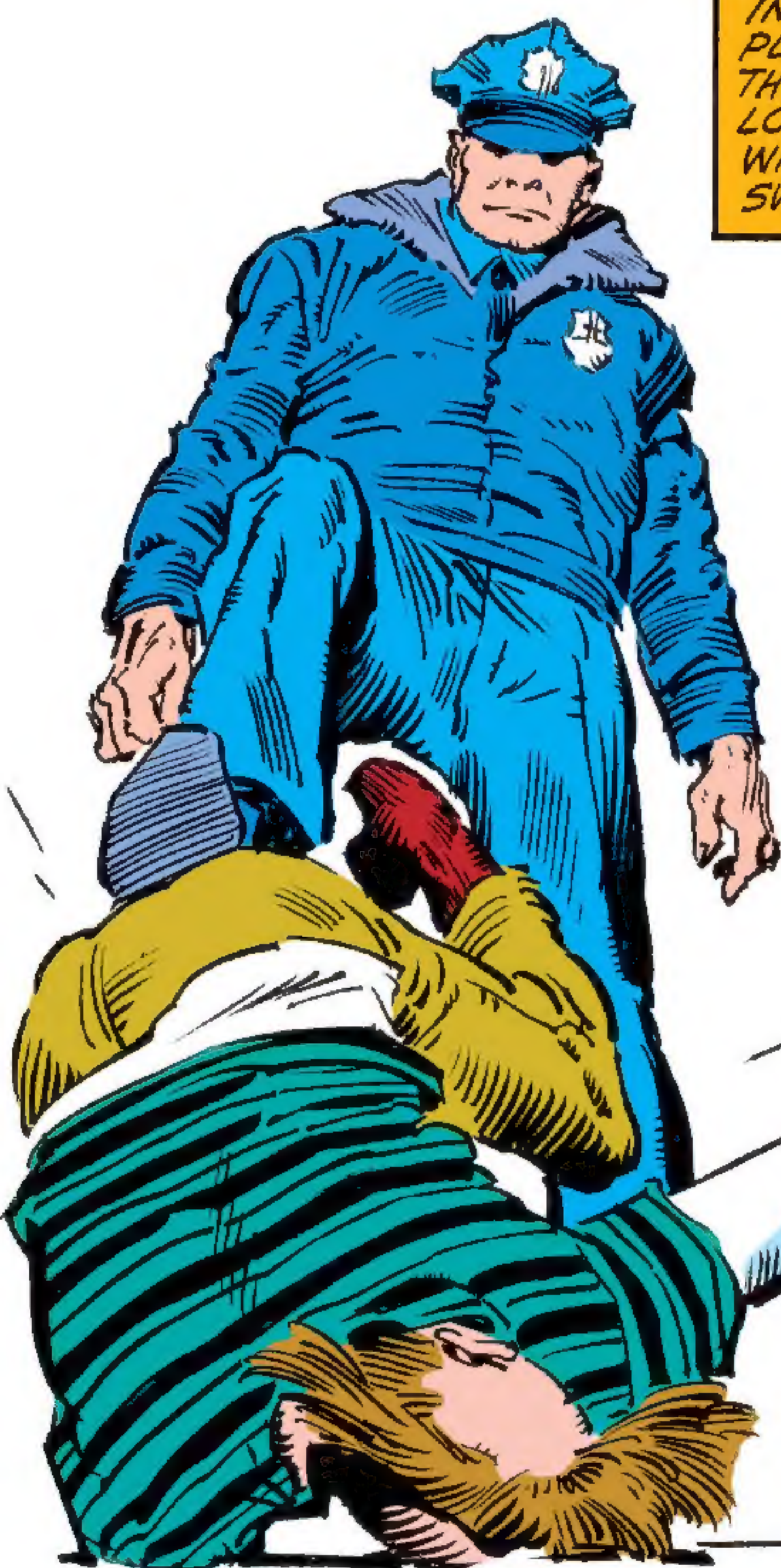


COSTELLO'D BEEN WAITING THERE THE WHOLE TIME WATCHING OUT LIKE HE ALWAYS DID FOR THE STILLWELL BOYS...

MOMMA MOMMA IT AIN'T FAIR-- KILL HIM I'LL KILL--

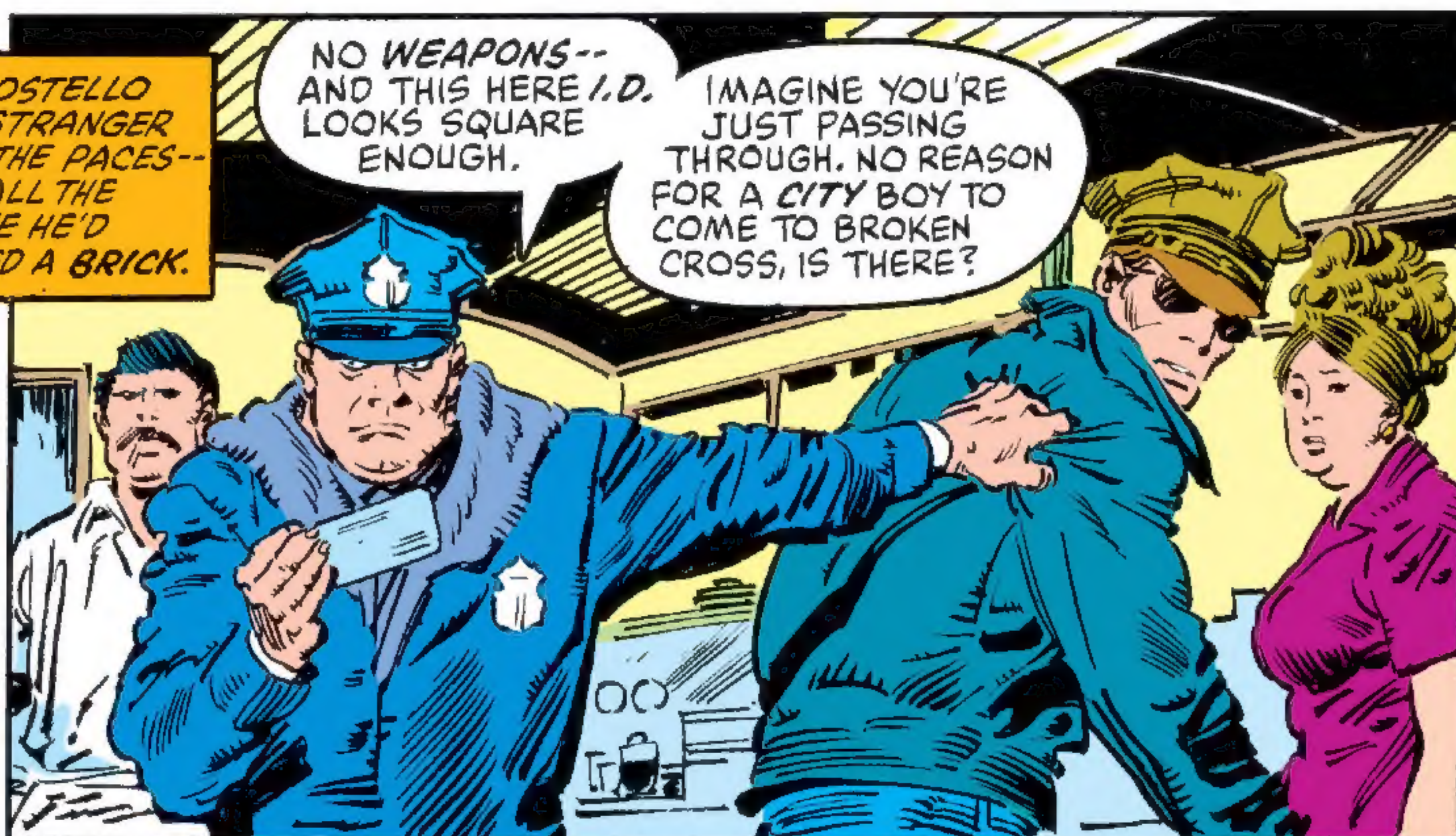


INSIDE, COSTELLO PUT THE STRANGER THROUGH THE PACES-- LOOKING ALL THE WHILE LIKE HE'D SWALLOWED A BRICK.



NO WEAPONS-- AND THIS HERE I.D. LOOKS SQUARE ENOUGH.

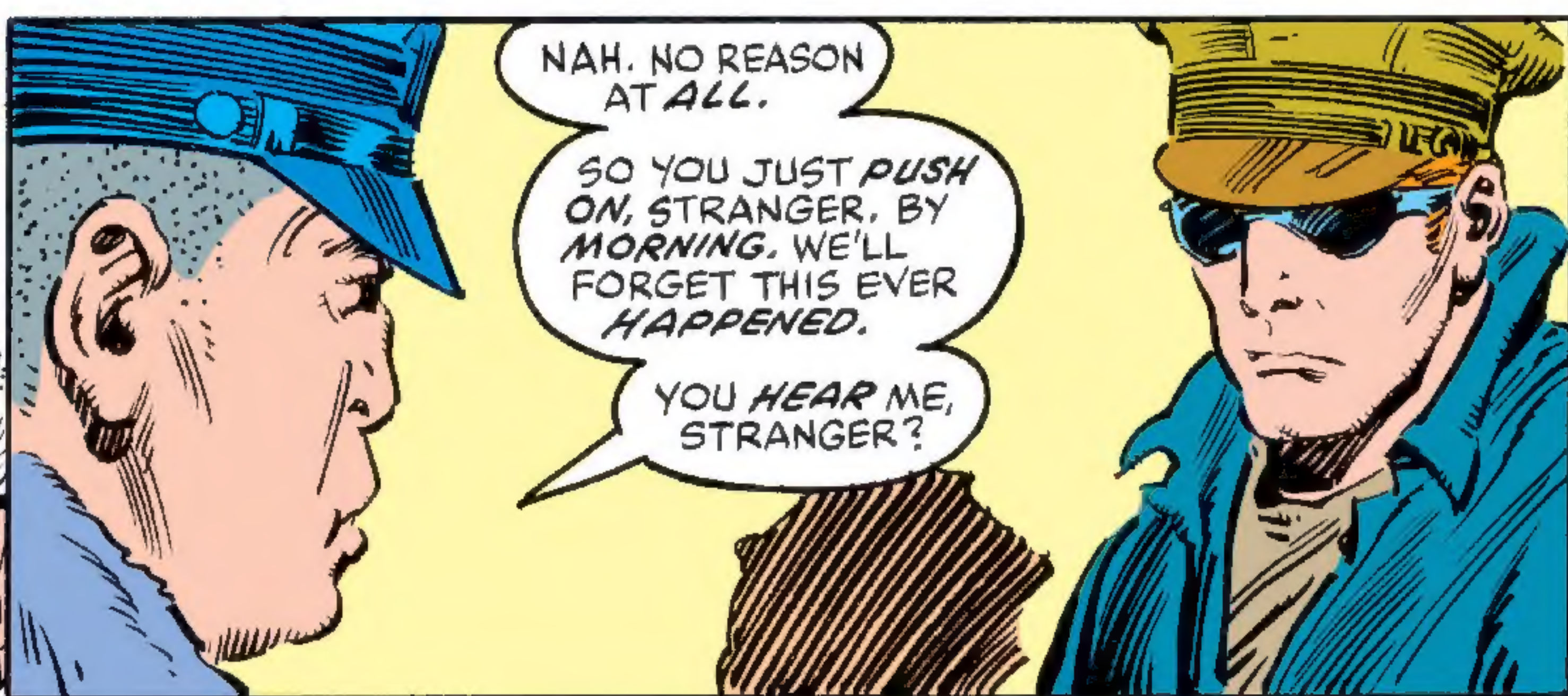
IMAGINE YOU'RE JUST PASSING THROUGH. NO REASON FOR A CITY BOY TO COME TO BROKEN CROSS, IS THERE?



NAH. NO REASON AT ALL.

SO YOU JUST PUSH ON, STRANGER. BY MORNING, WE'LL FORGET THIS EVER HAPPENED.

YOU HEAR ME, STRANGER?

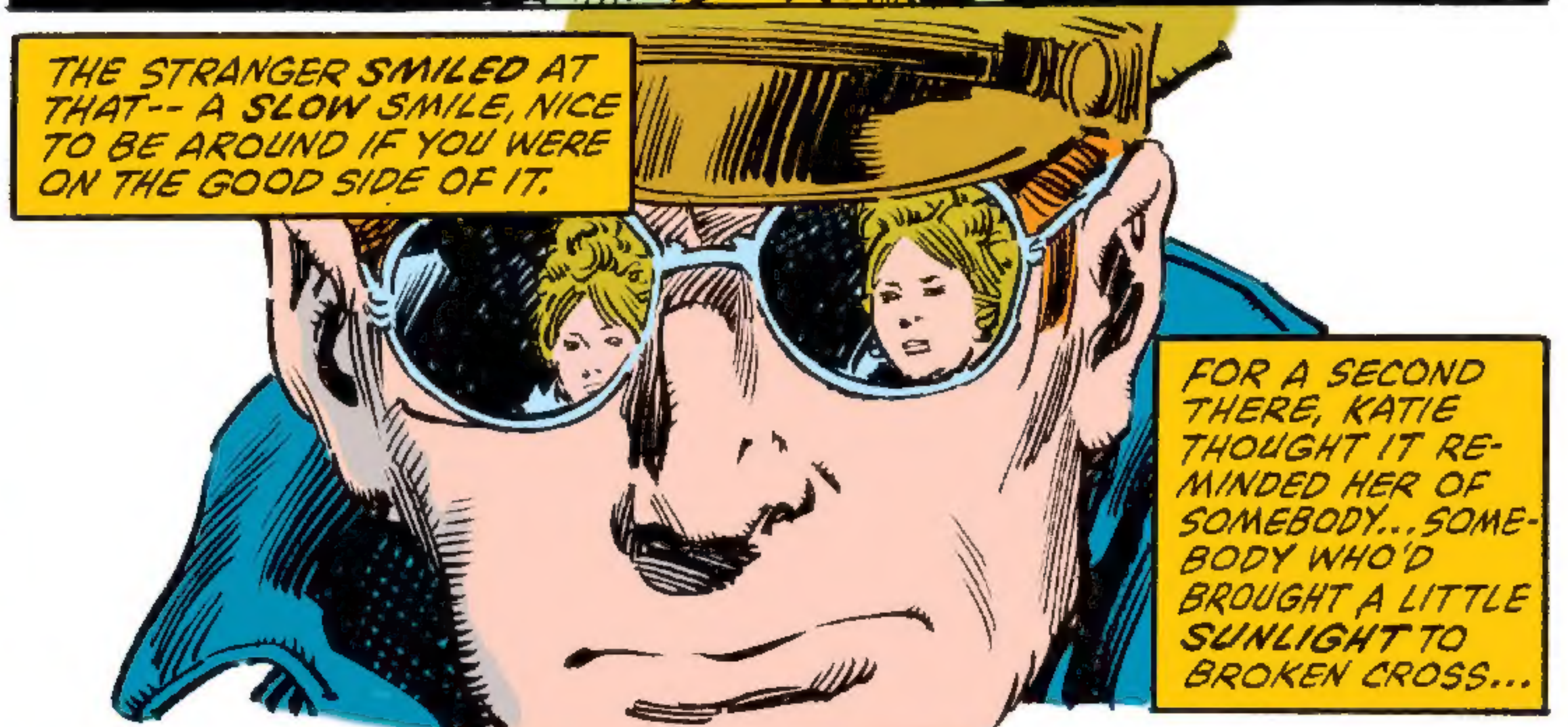
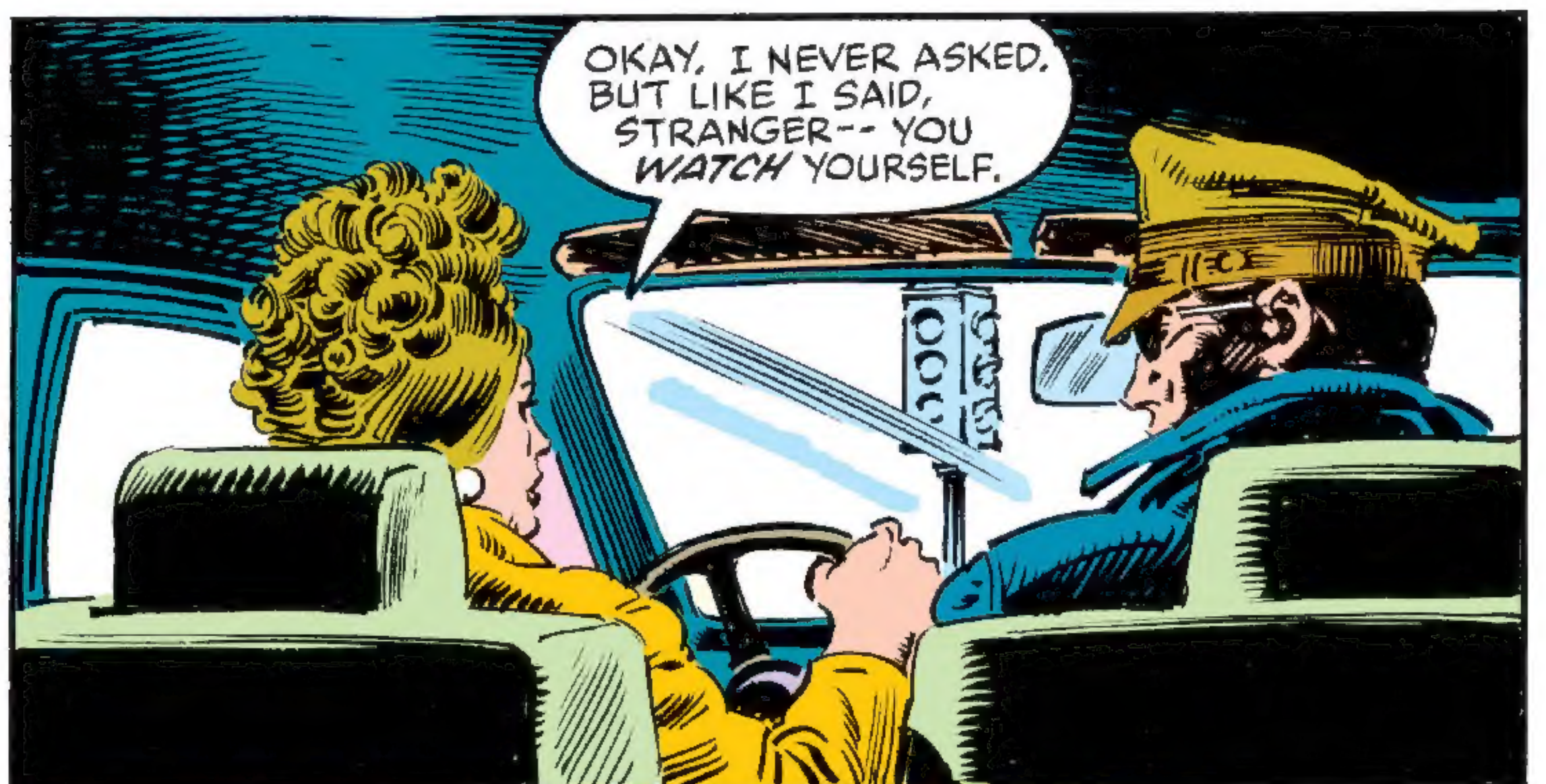
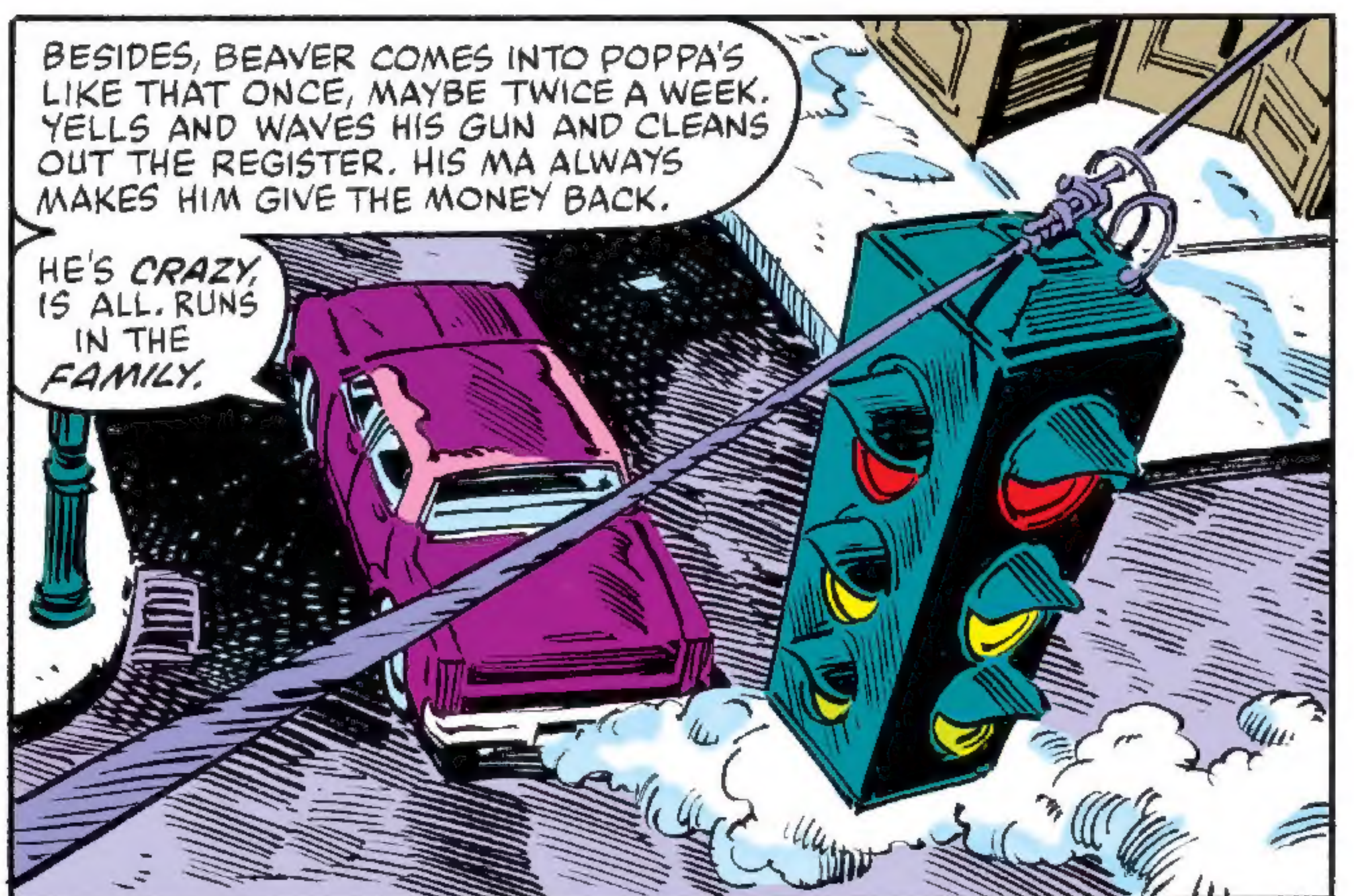
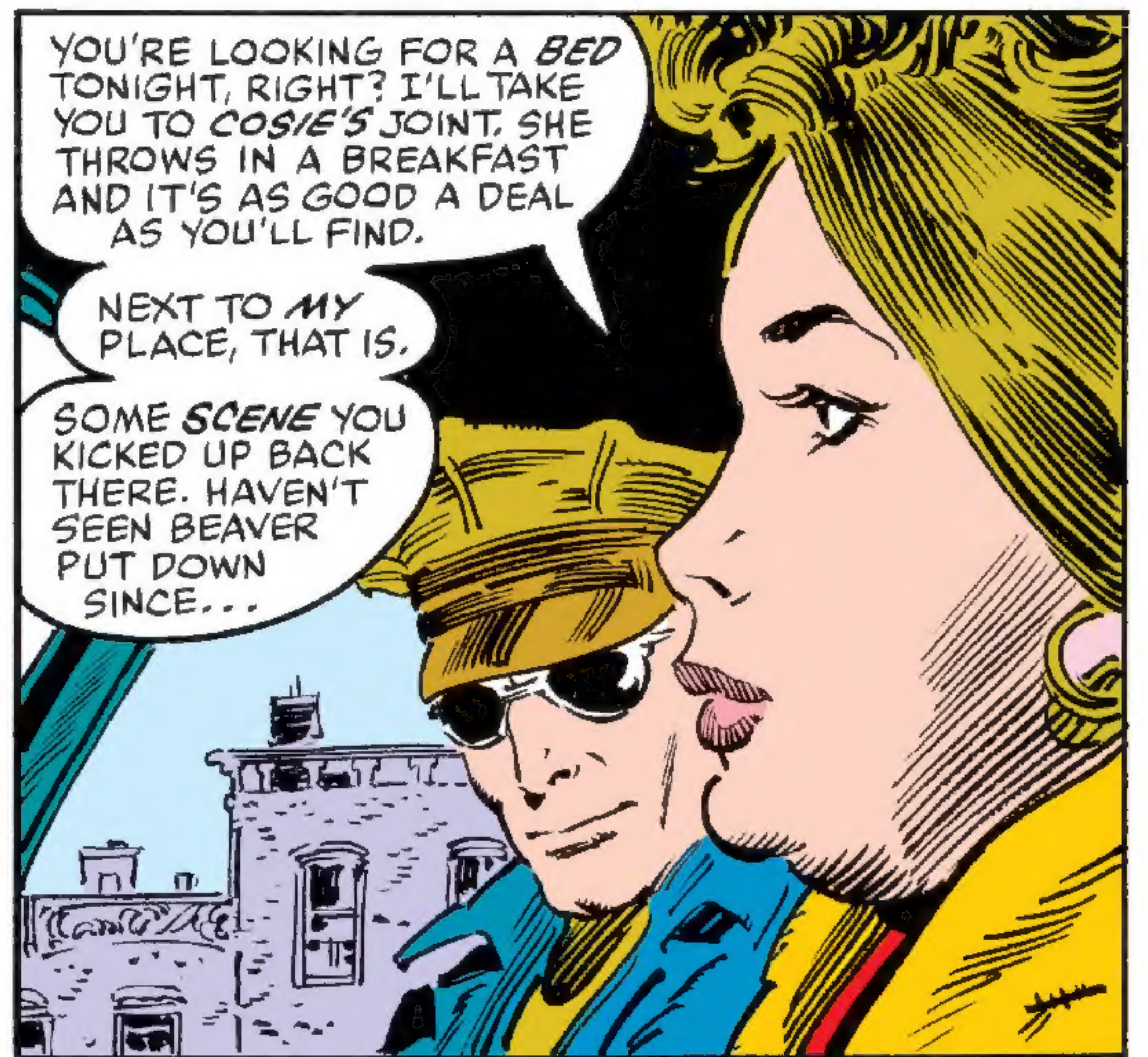
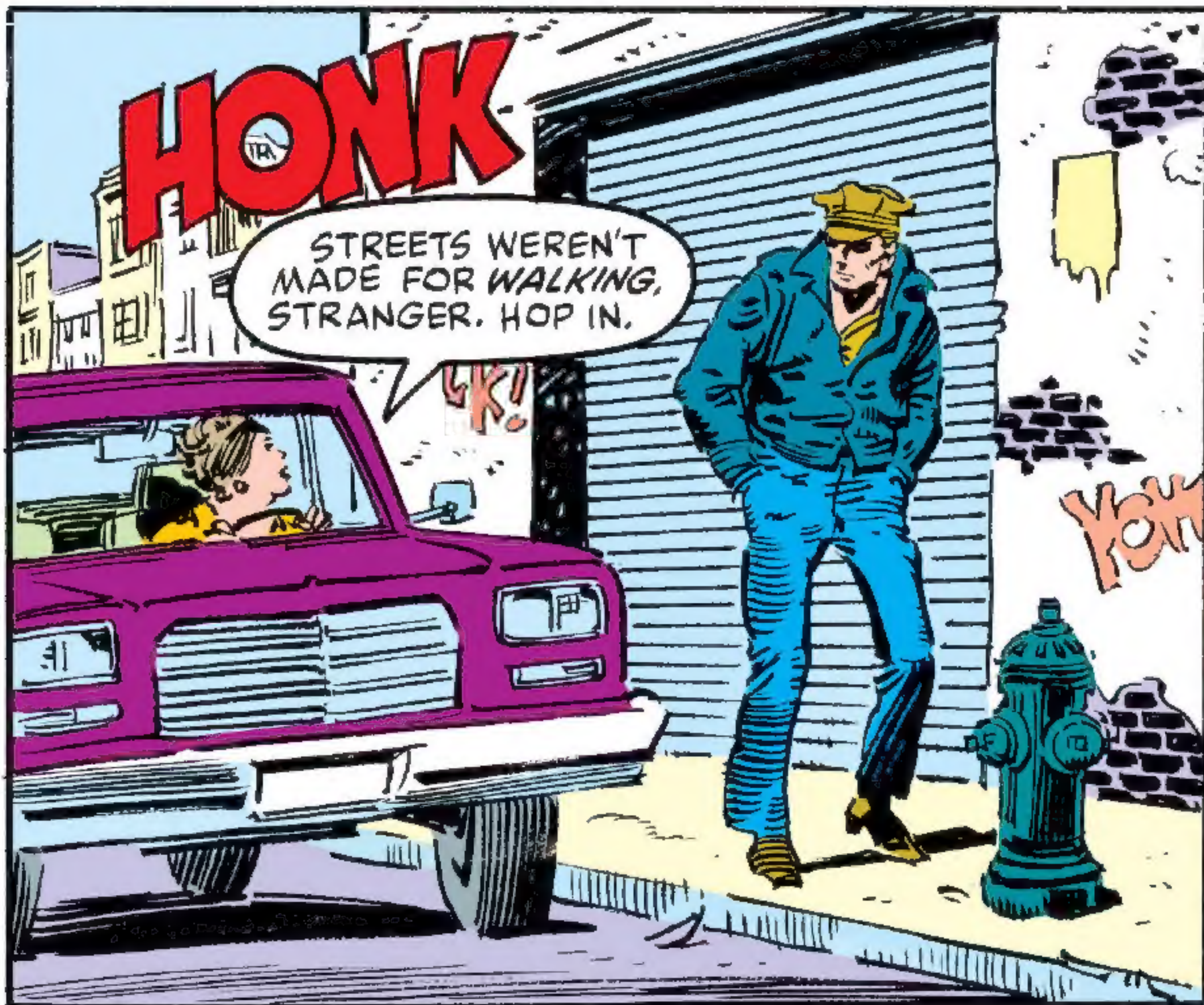


REMIND YOU OV SUMBUDDY, LOOTENANT? NOT DA WAY HE LOOKS SA MUCH AS...

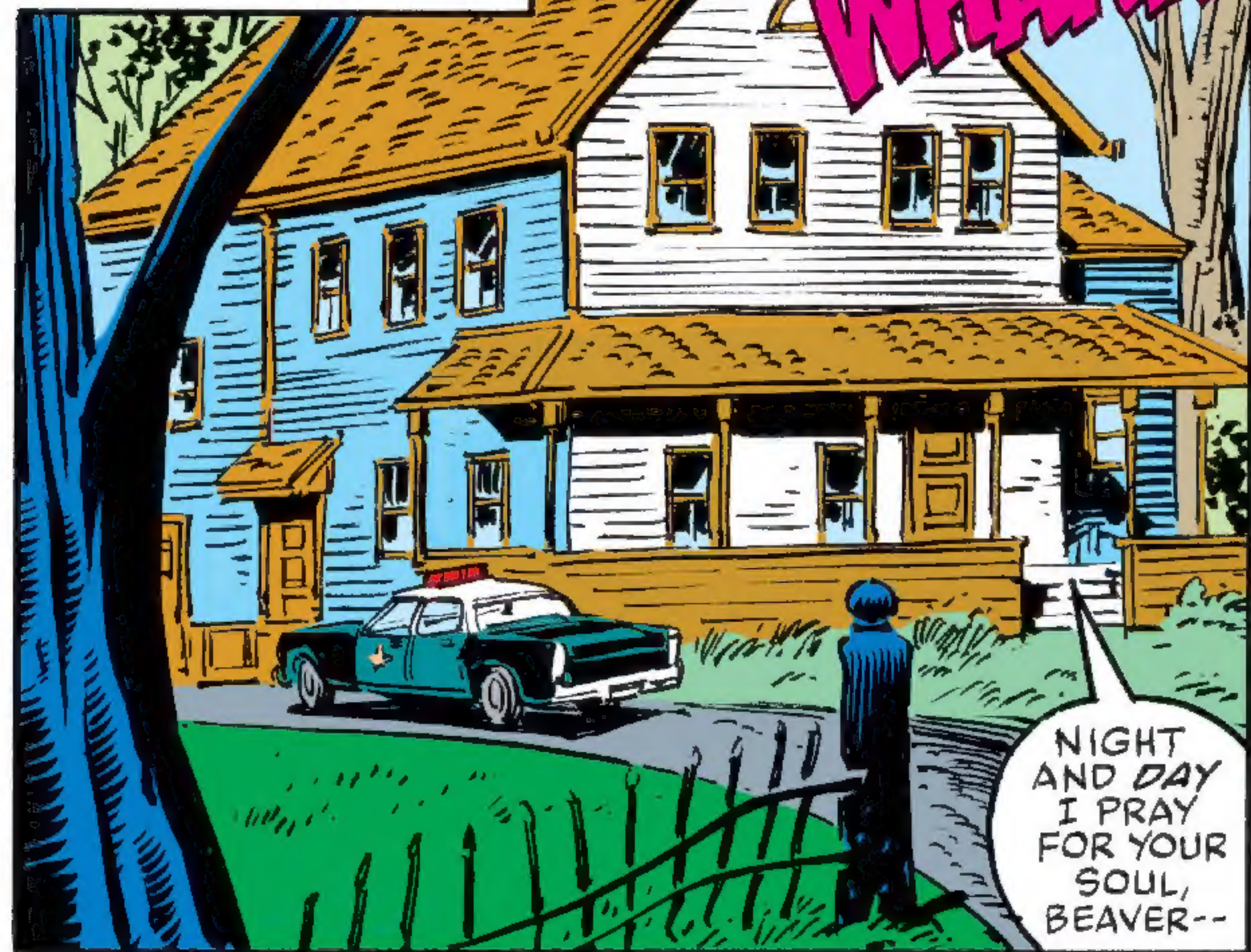


SHUT UP, POPPA.

JUST SHUT UP.



JUST OUTSIDE BROKEN CROSS PROPER, IN THE FOOTHILLS THAT USED TO BE THE CLASSY PART OF TOWN--WHEN IT HAD A CLASSY PART...



NIGHT AND DAY I PRAY FOR YOUR SOUL, BEAVER--

--AND STILL YOU SIN, AND STILL YOU SIN. YOU TEST MY FAITH, BEAVER.

UH, MYRTLE--



FOR TWENTY YEARS I NURTURE MY SONS...

... TRY TO SHOW THEM THE GOOD PATH...

MYRTLE-- WHEN YOU GOT A MINUTE--



...AND THEY SIN AND SIN. ONE WITH GUNS AND KNIVES...

...THE OTHER WITH UNHOLY FIRE...



MYRTLE-- THIS STRANGER --HE'S GOT ME WORRIED. HE'S FROM THE CITY.

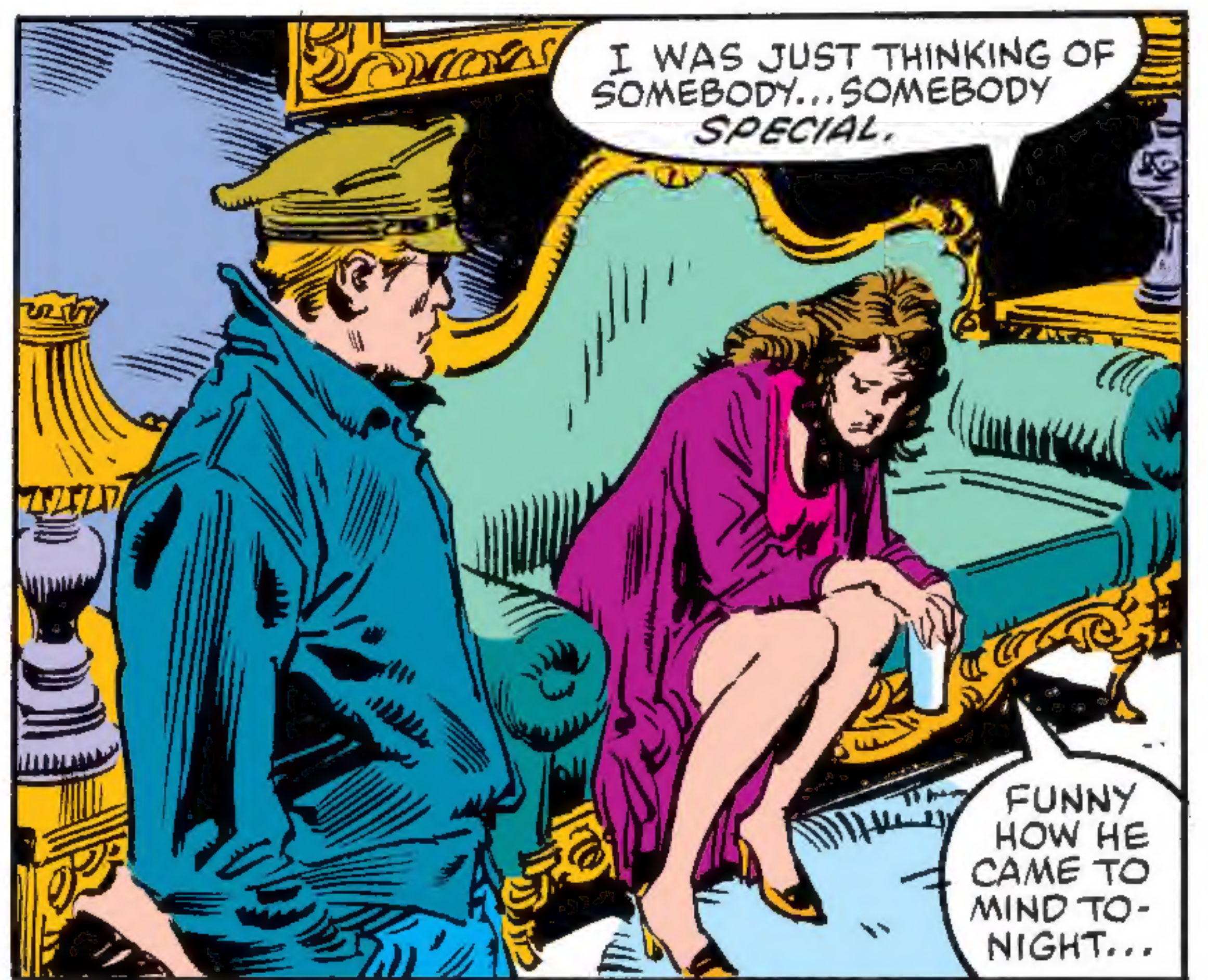
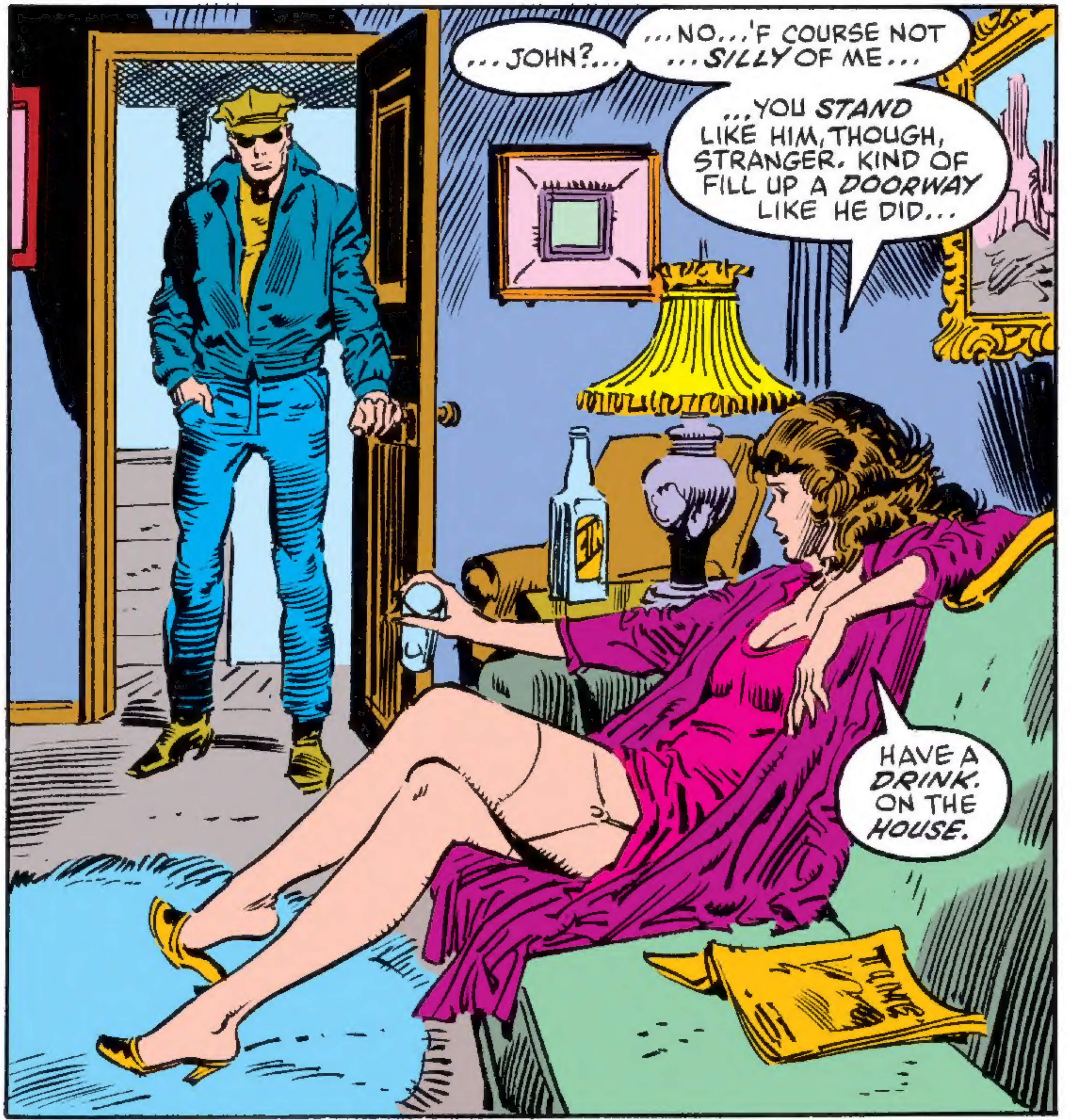
IF HE'S AFTER BILLY THAT'S BAD ENOUGH. BUT IF HE STARTS POKING AROUND, THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE'LL--

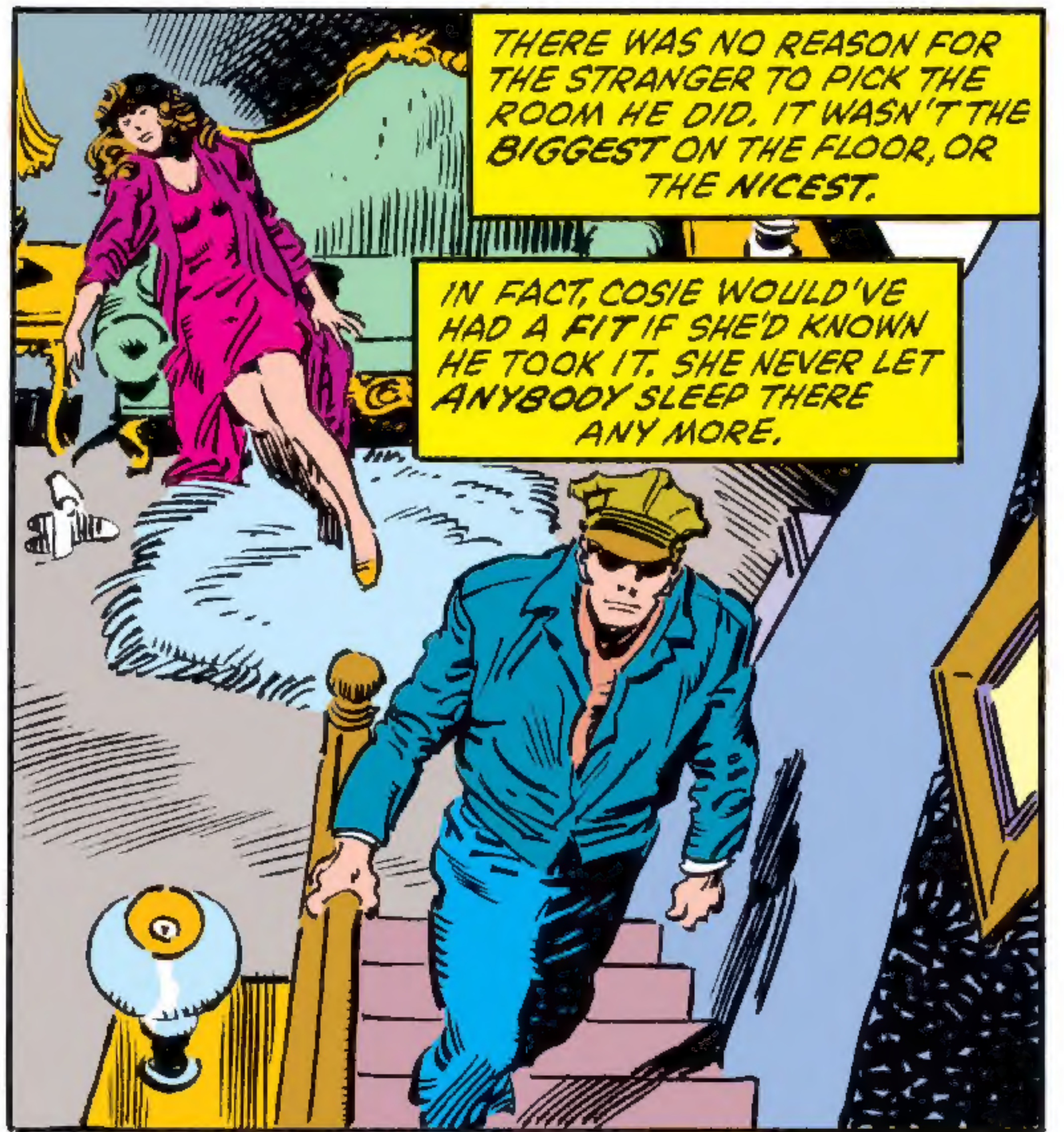
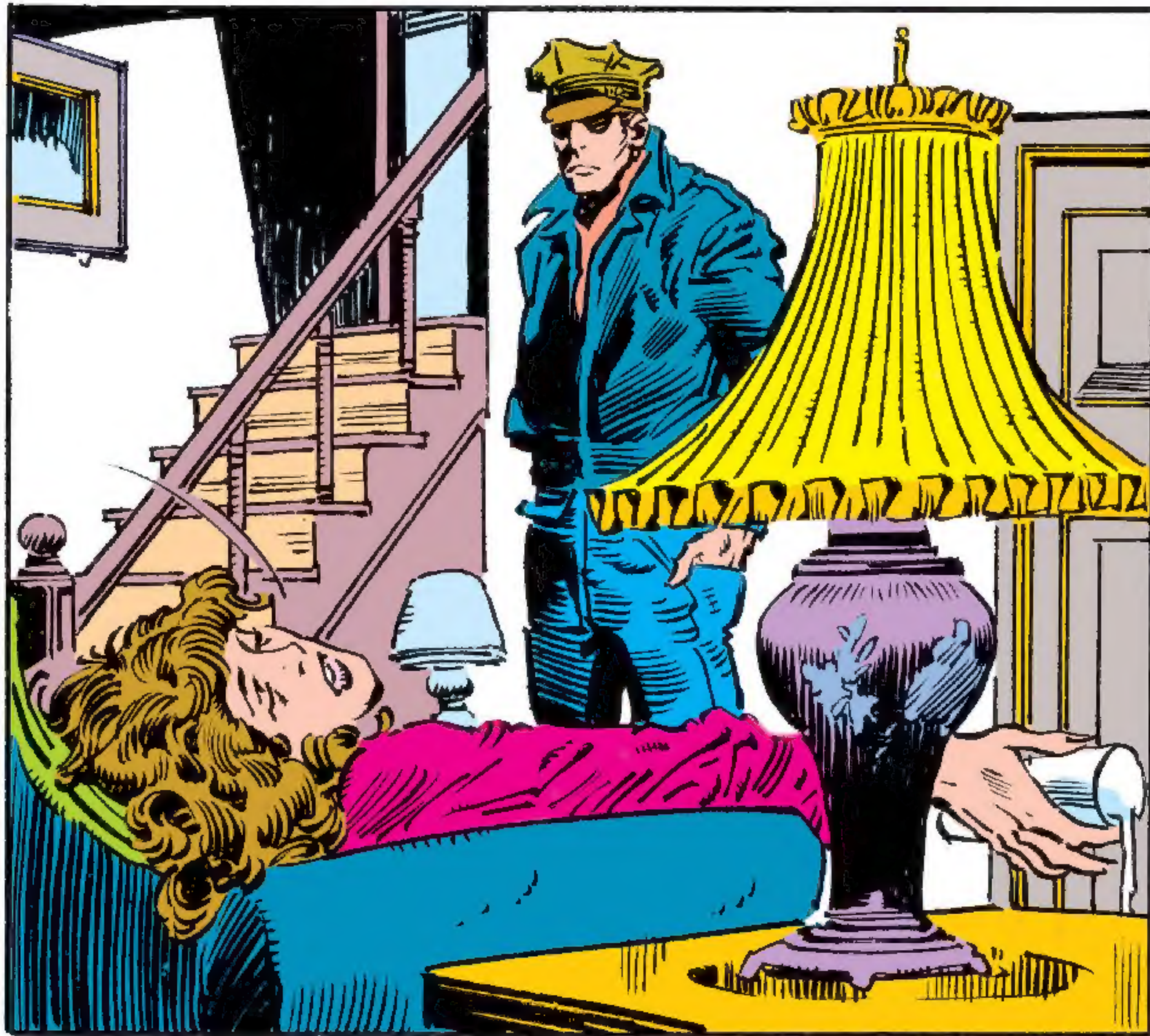
WE BOTH KNOW WHAT HE'LL FIND, MORRIS.



AND WE BOTH KNOW YOUR HANDS ARE AS DIRTY AS MINE.

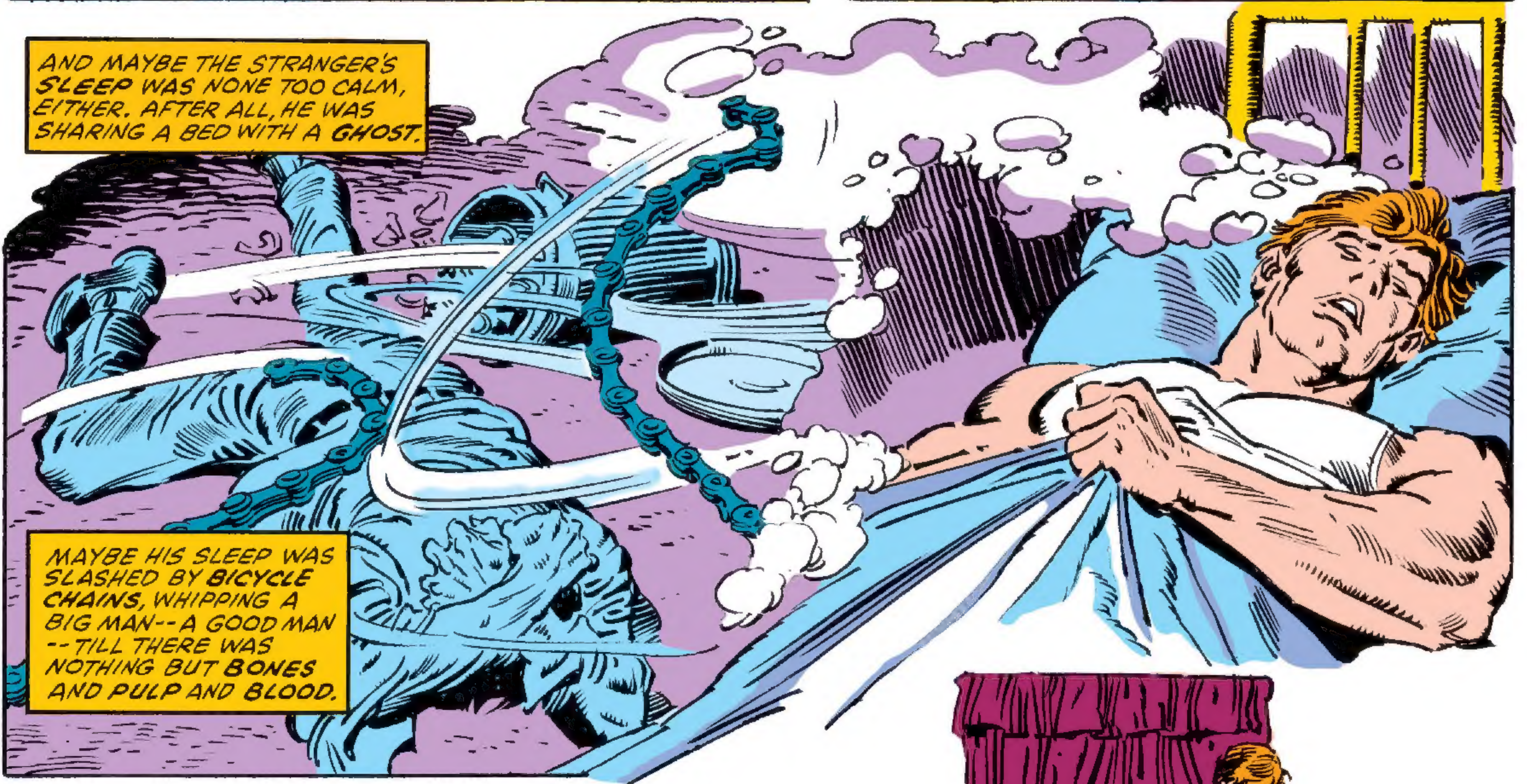






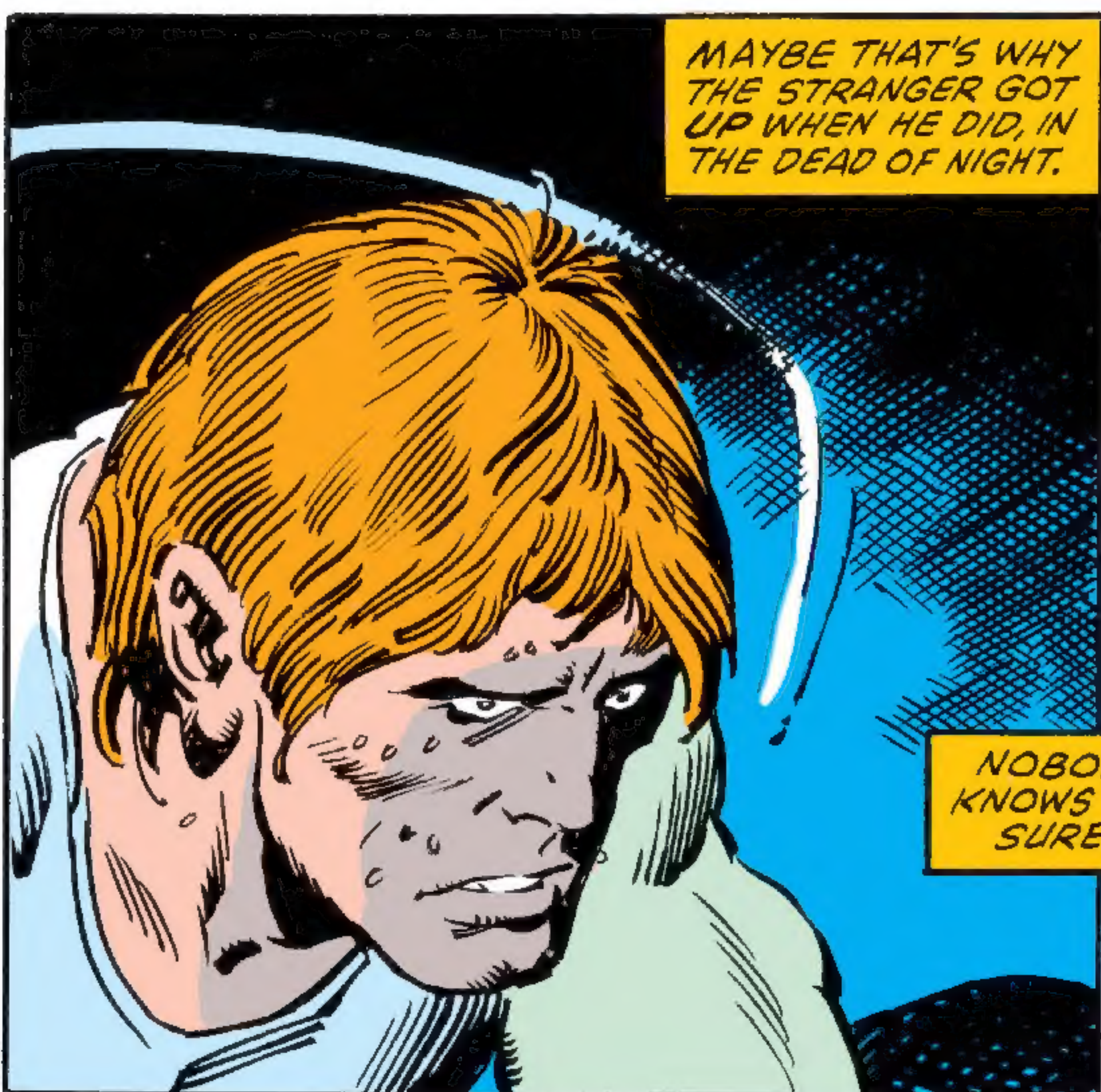
THERE WAS NO REASON FOR THE STRANGER TO PICK THE ROOM HE DID. IT WASN'T THE BIGGEST ON THE FLOOR, OR THE NICEST.

IN FACT, COSIE WOULD'VE HAD A FIT IF SHE'D KNOWN HE TOOK IT. SHE NEVER LET ANYBODY SLEEP THERE ANY MORE.



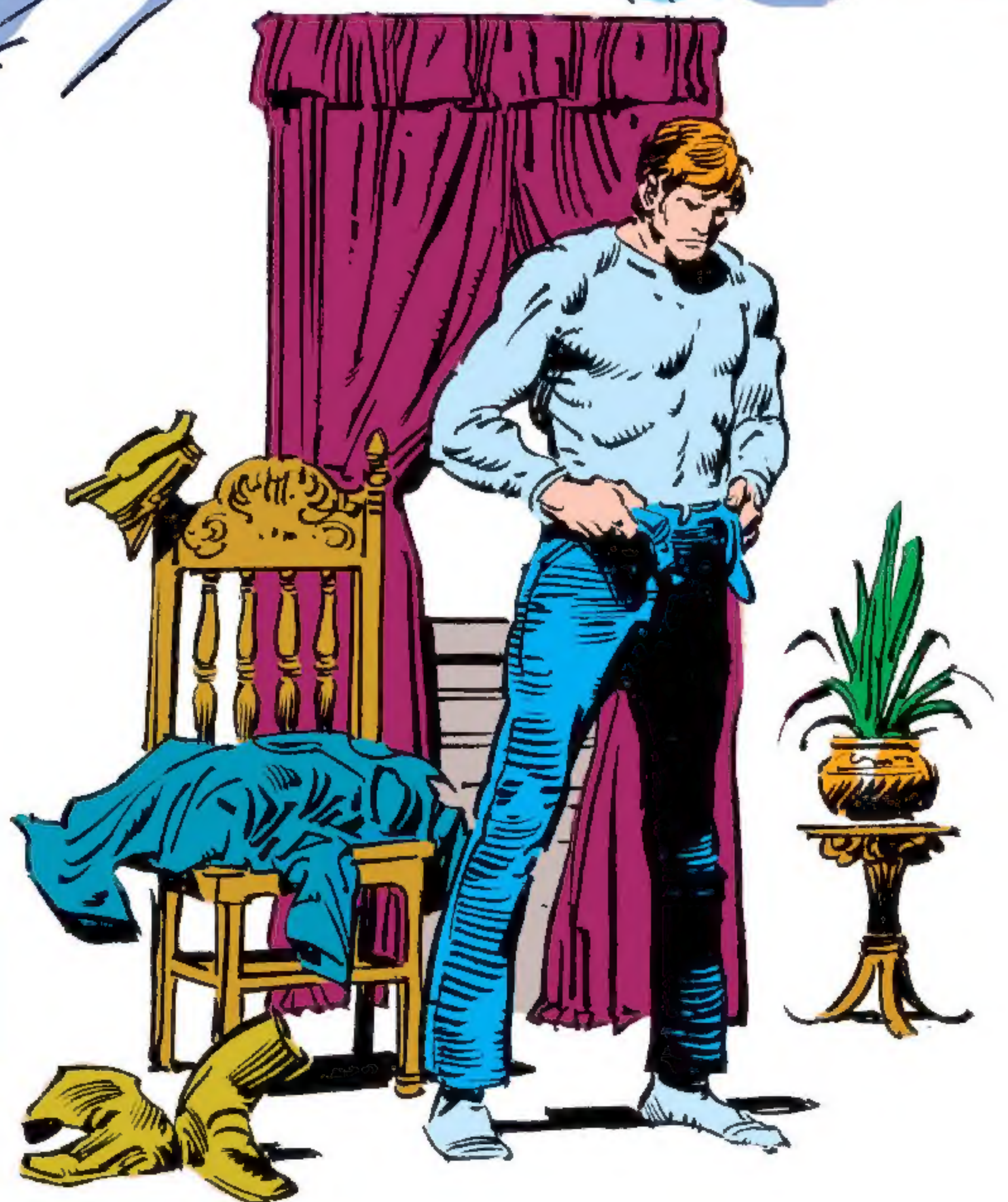
AND MAYBE THE STRANGER'S SLEEP WAS NONE TOO CALM, EITHER. AFTER ALL, HE WAS SHARING A BED WITH A GHOST.

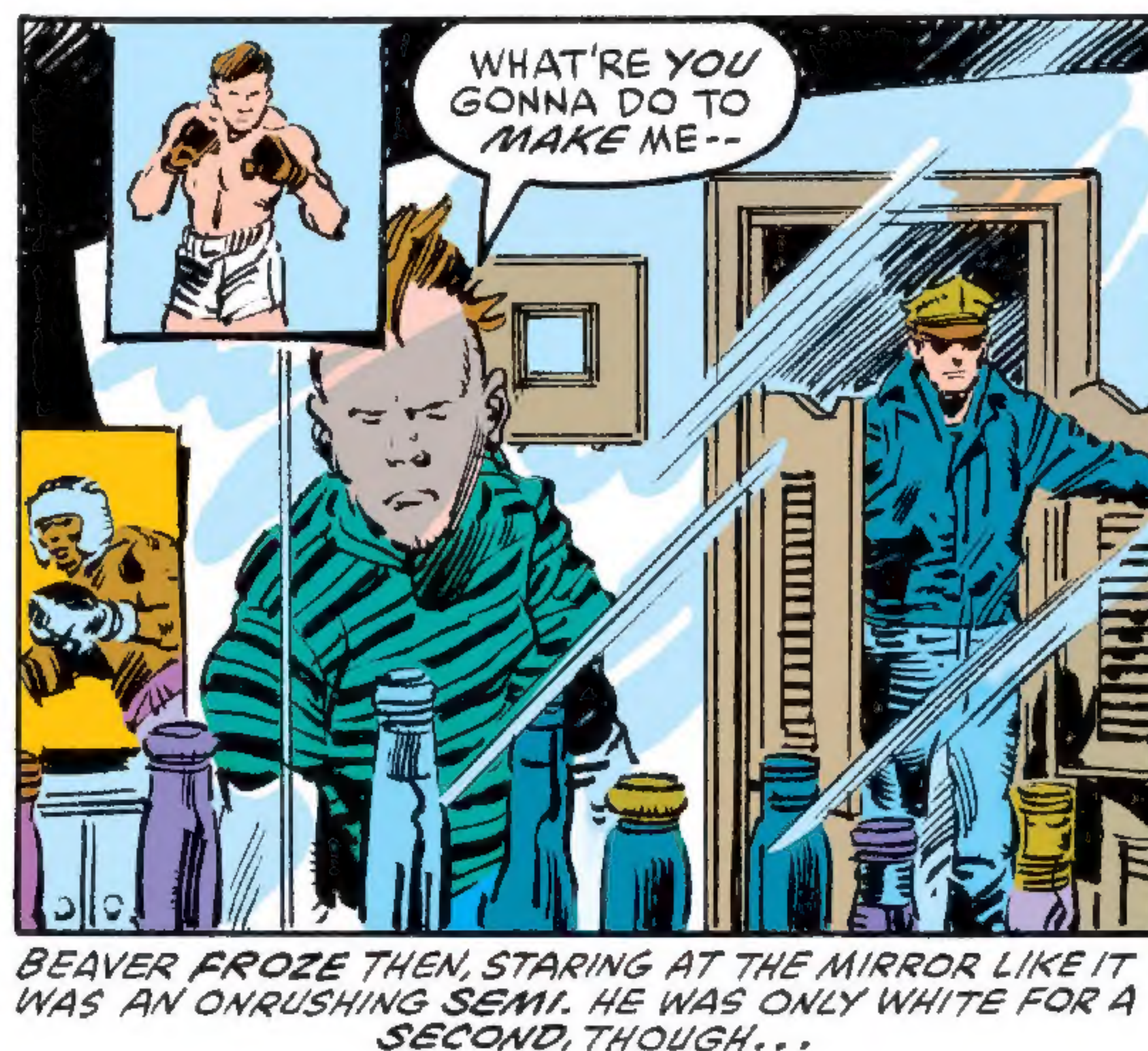
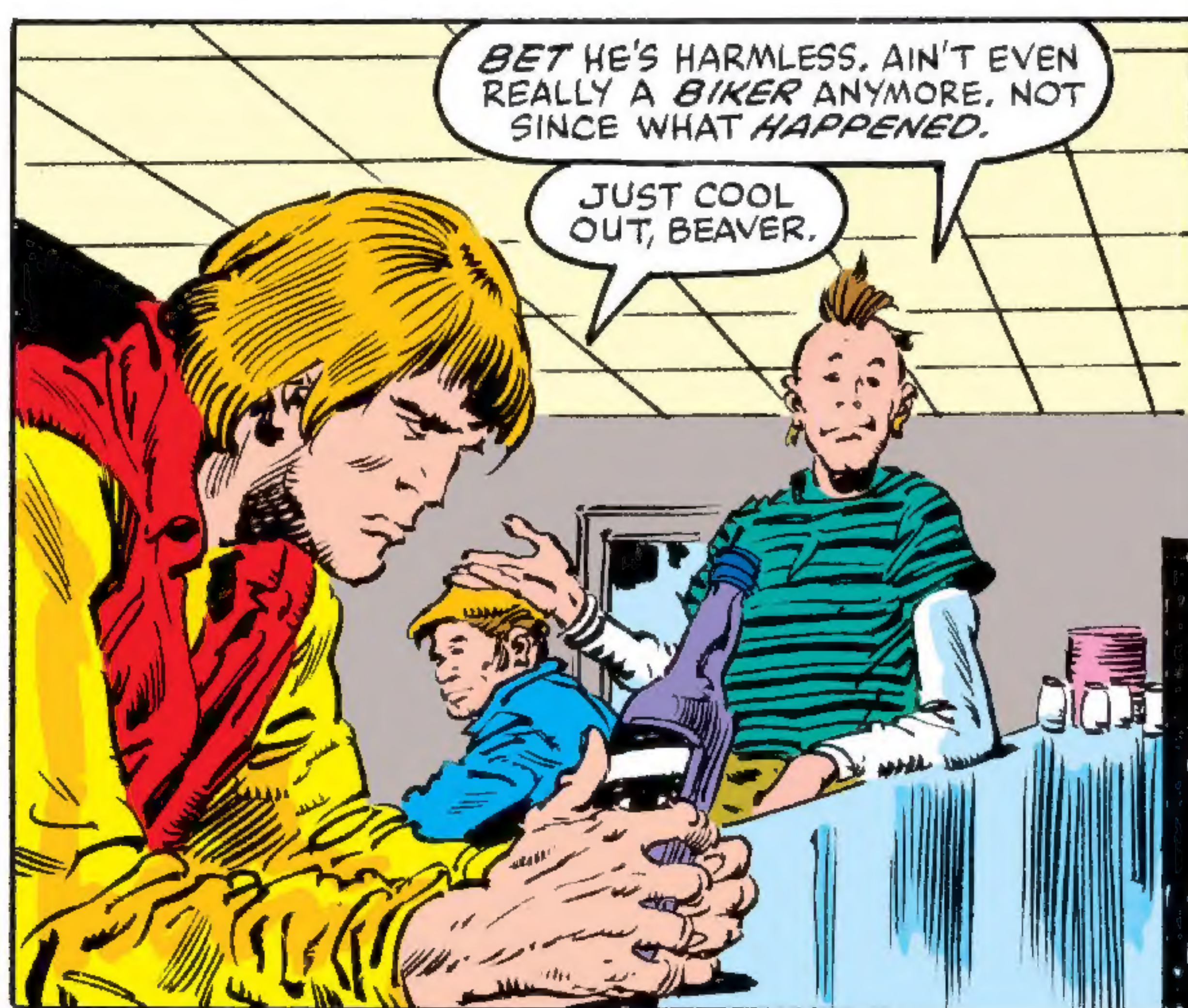
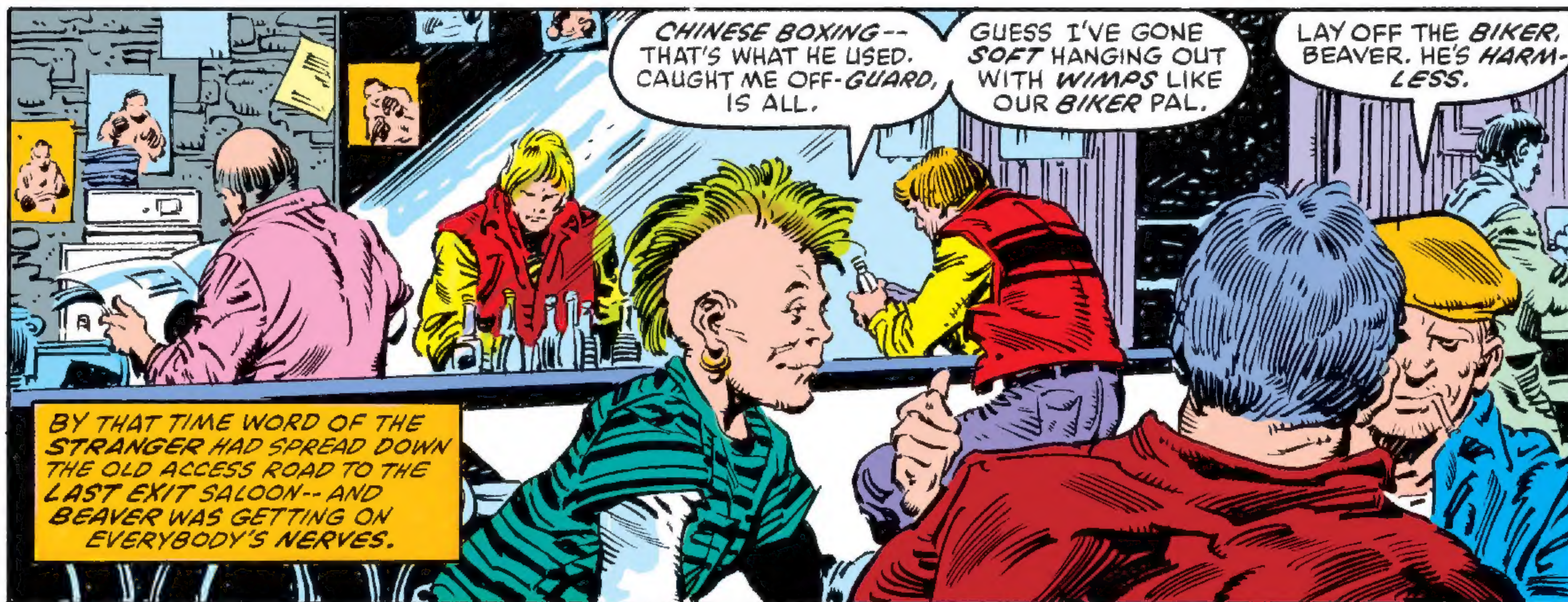
MAYBE HIS SLEEP WAS SLASHED BY BICYCLE CHAINS, WHIPPING A BIG MAN-- A GOOD MAN --TILL THERE WAS NOTHING BUT BONES AND PULP AND BLOOD.

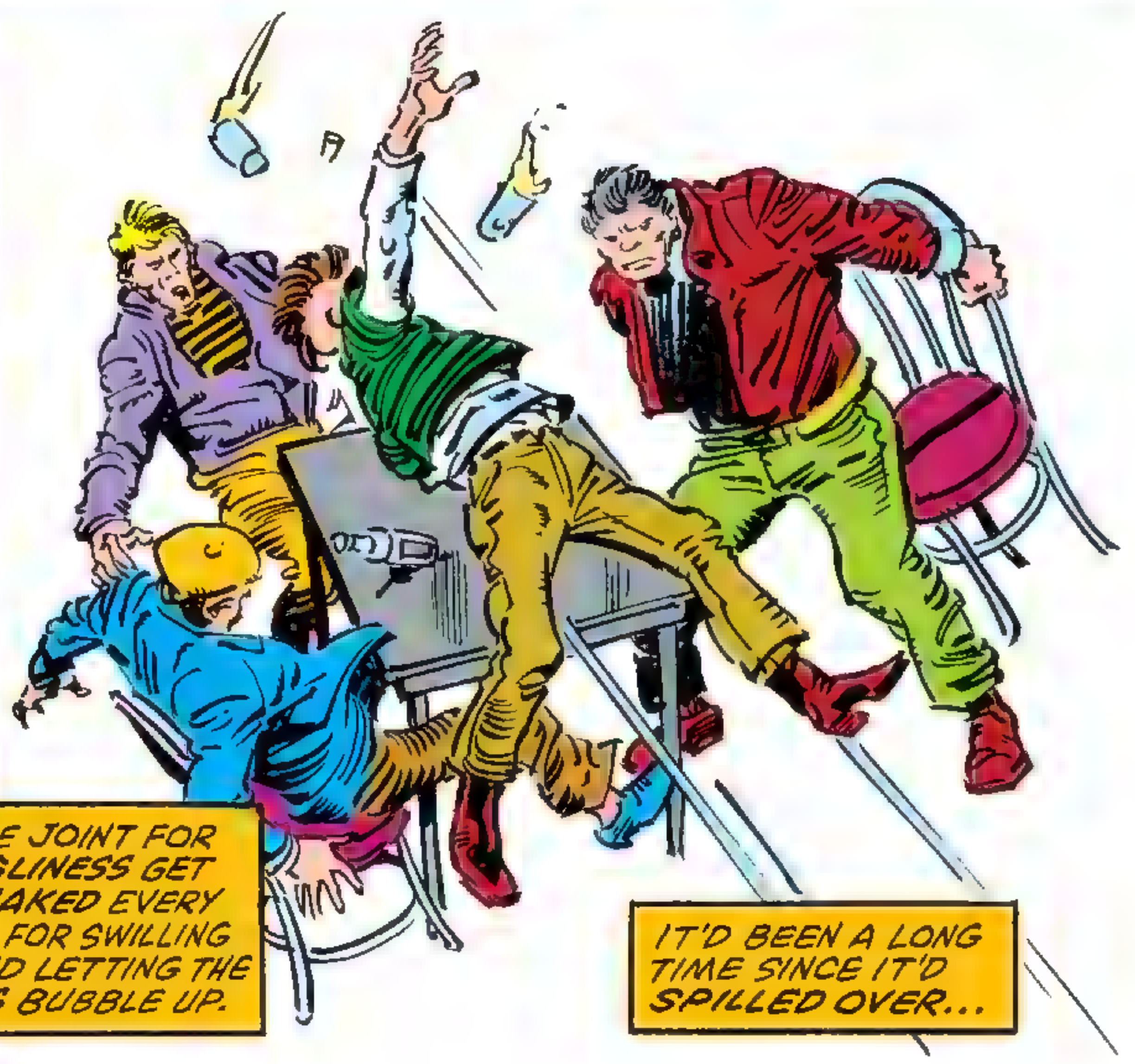
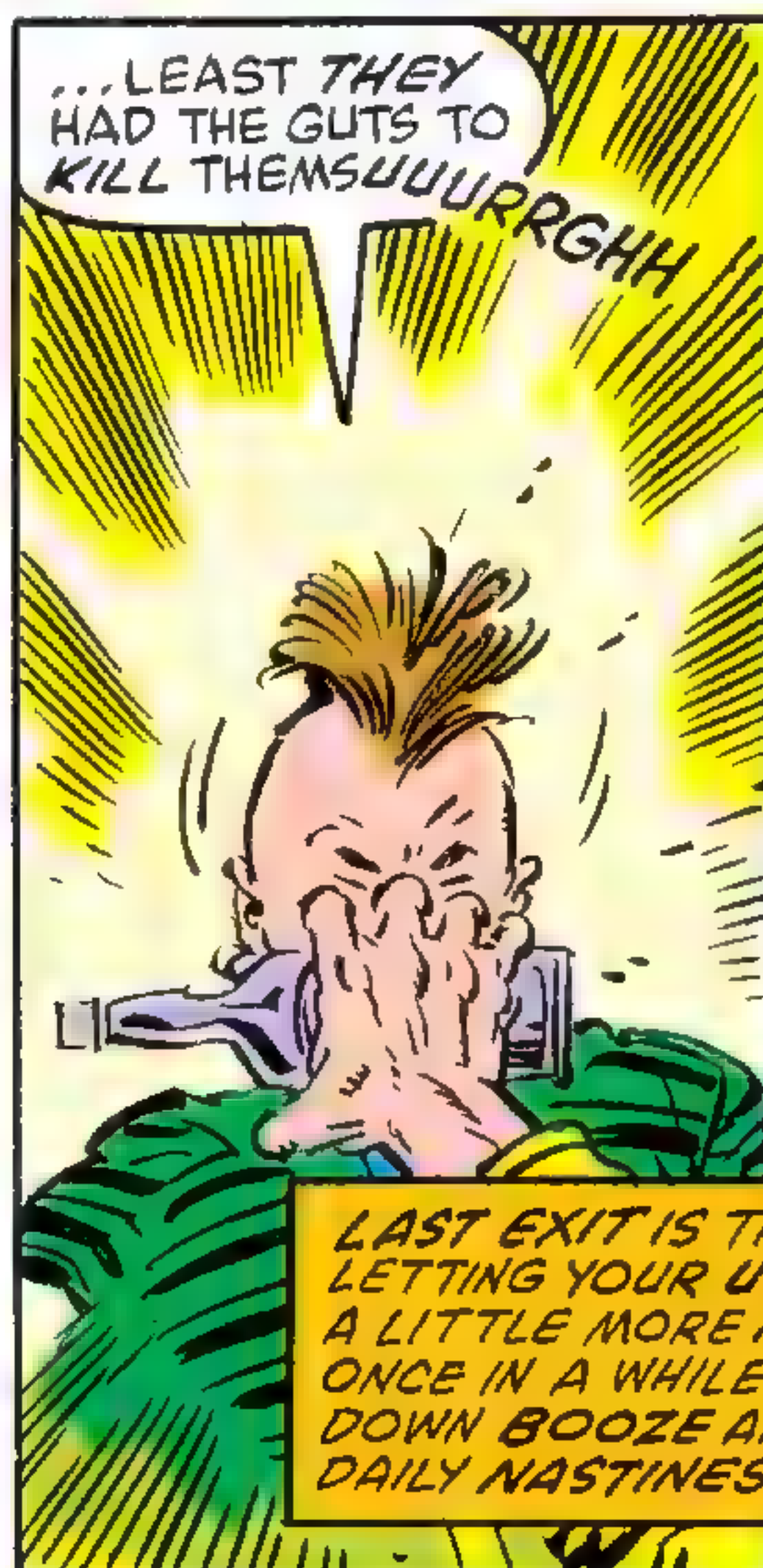
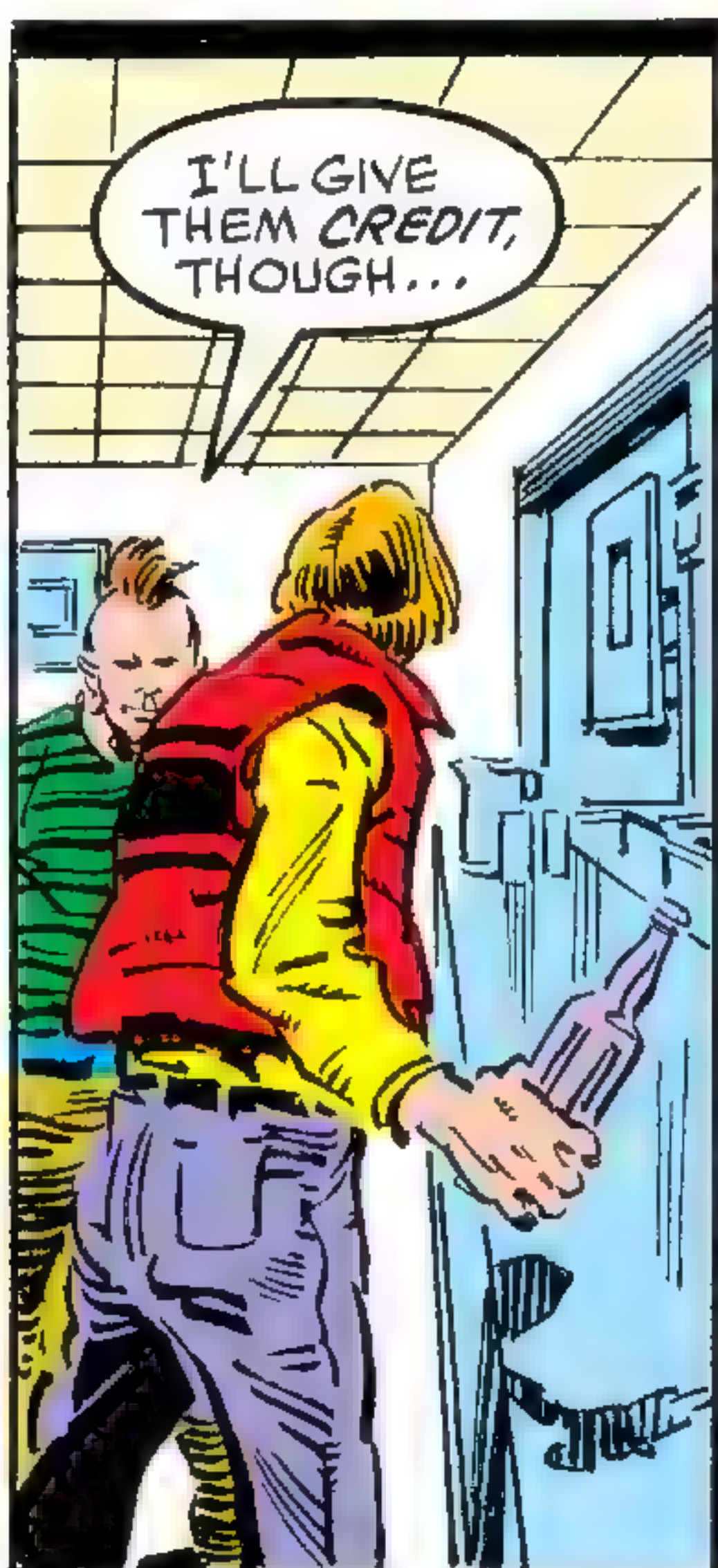
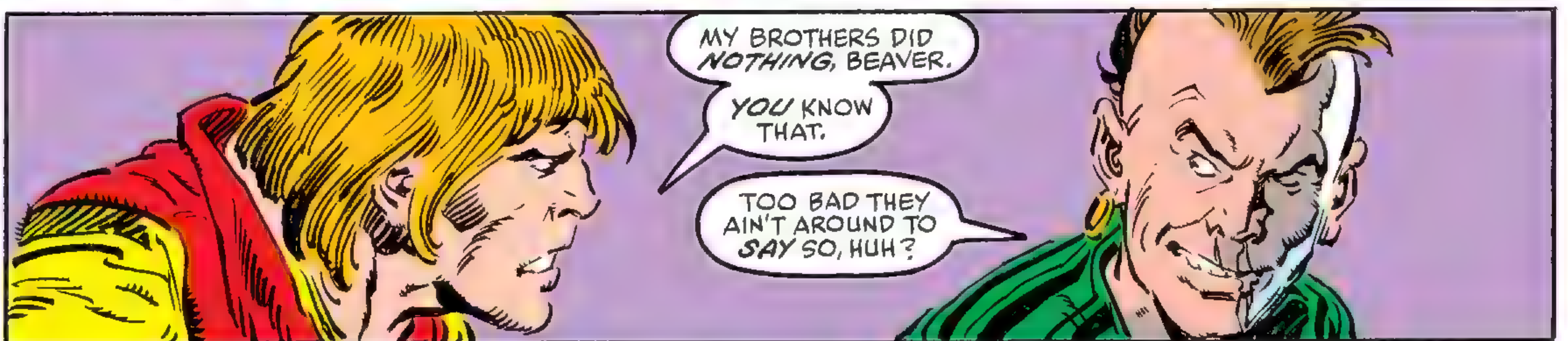
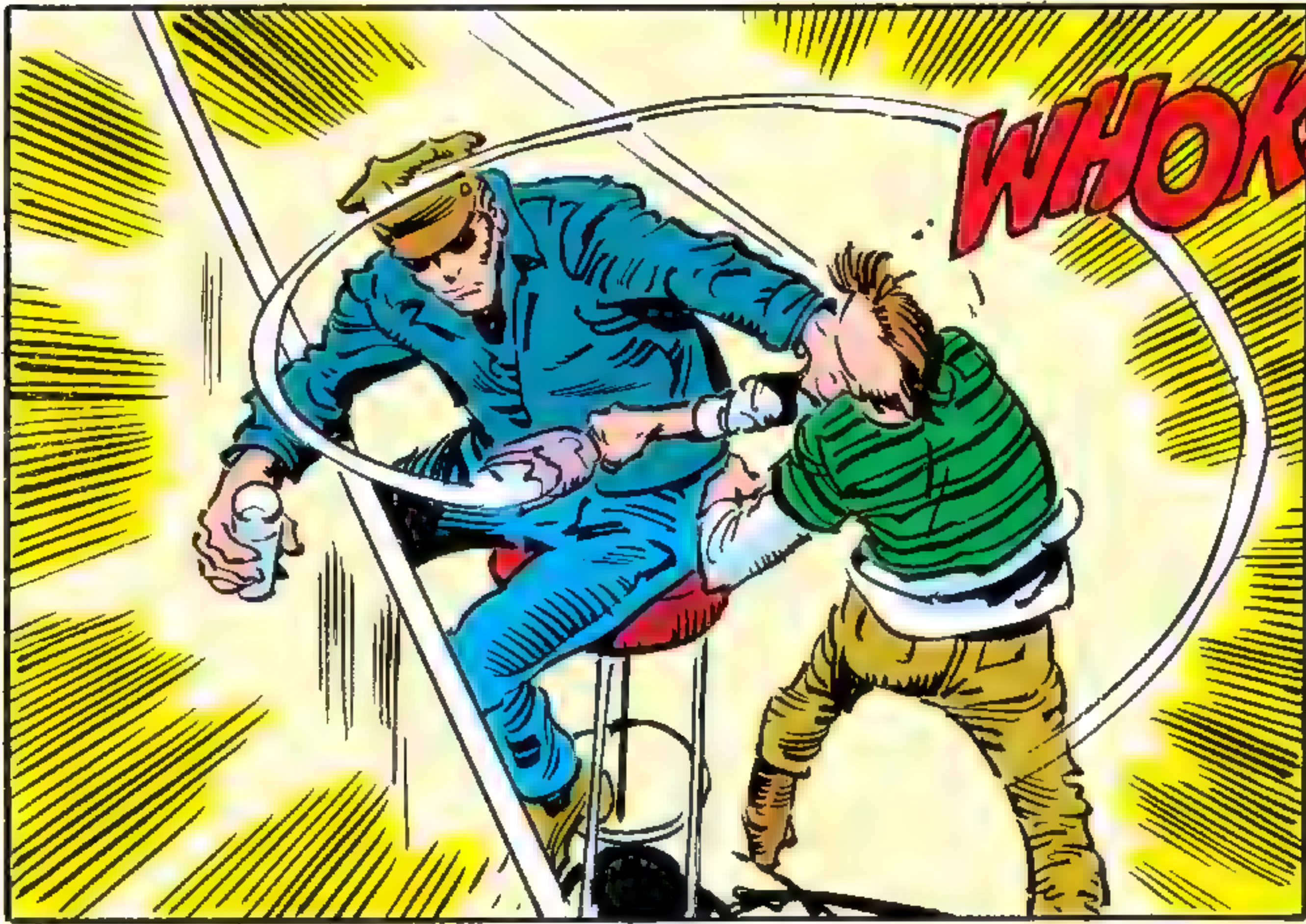


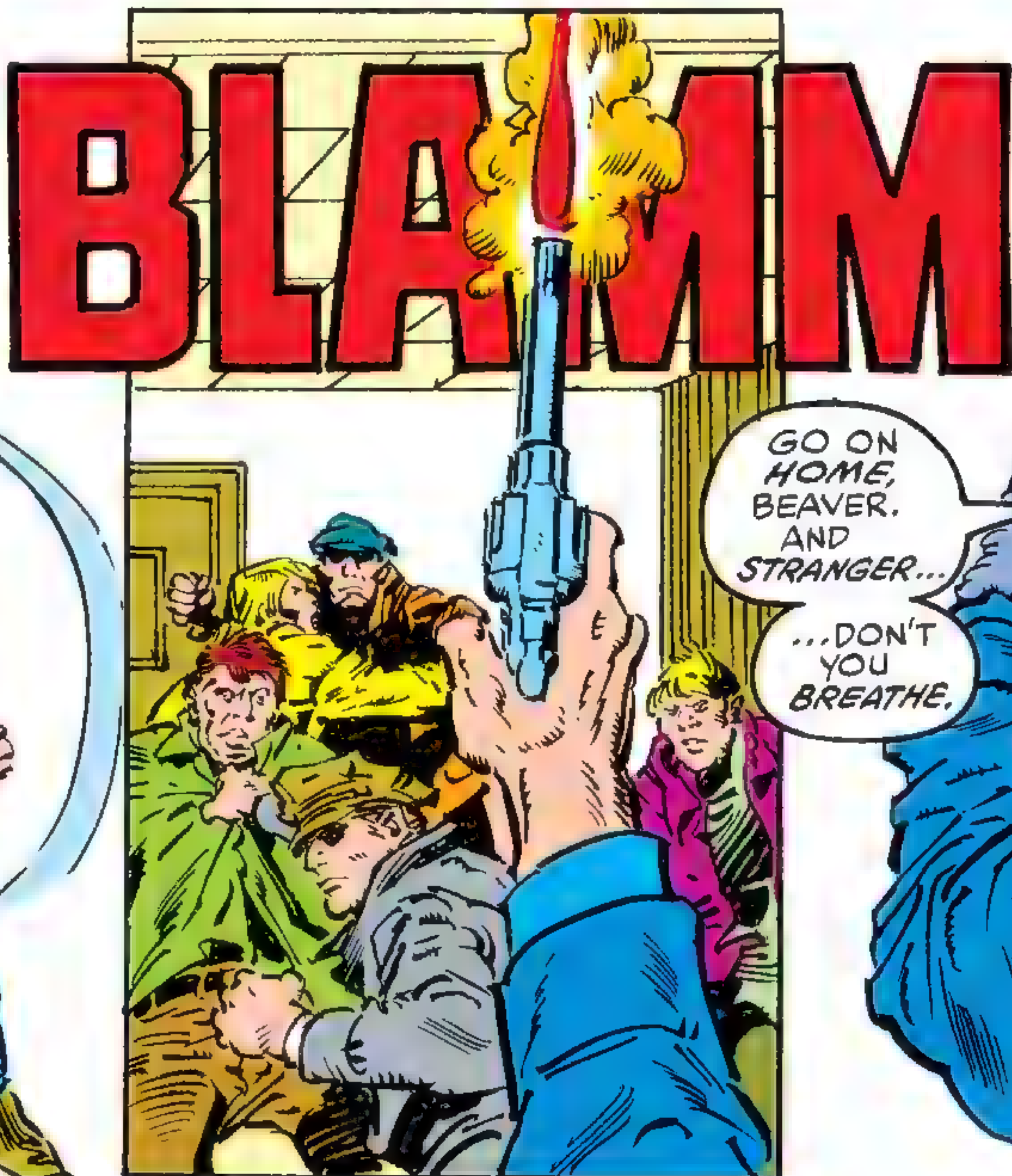
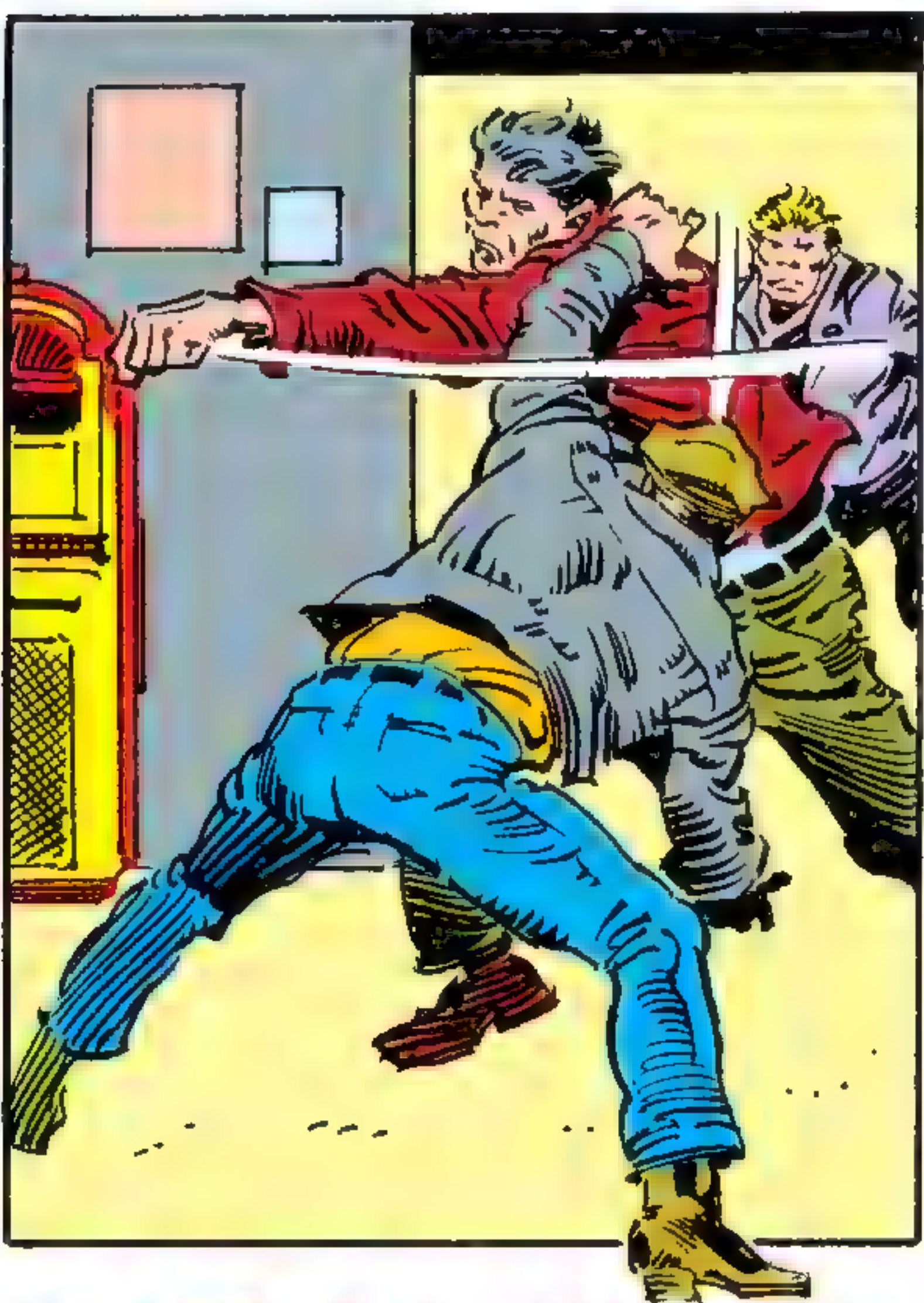
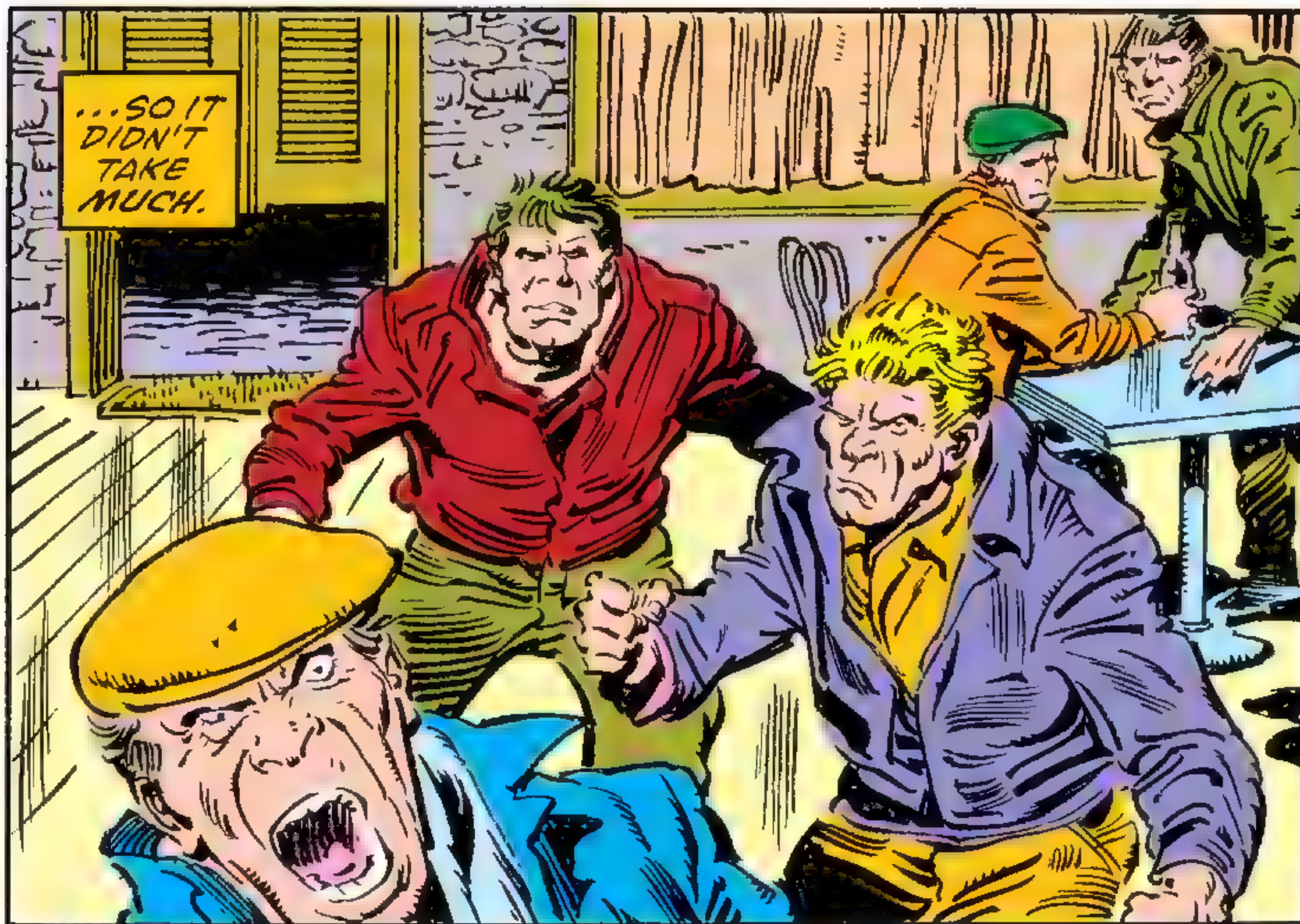
MAYBE THAT'S WHY THE STRANGER GOT UP WHEN HE DID, IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT.

NOBODY KNOWS FOR SURE.

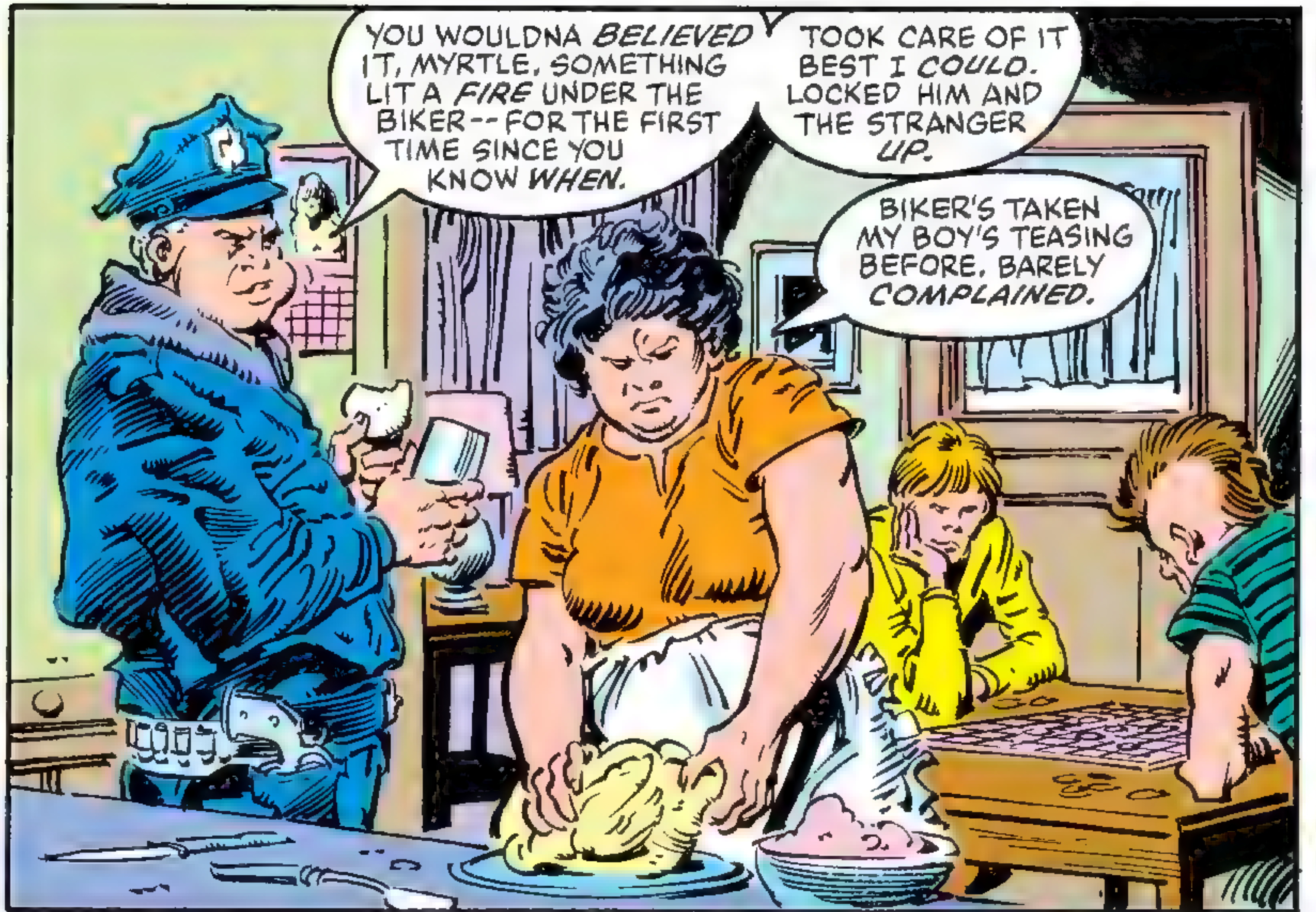
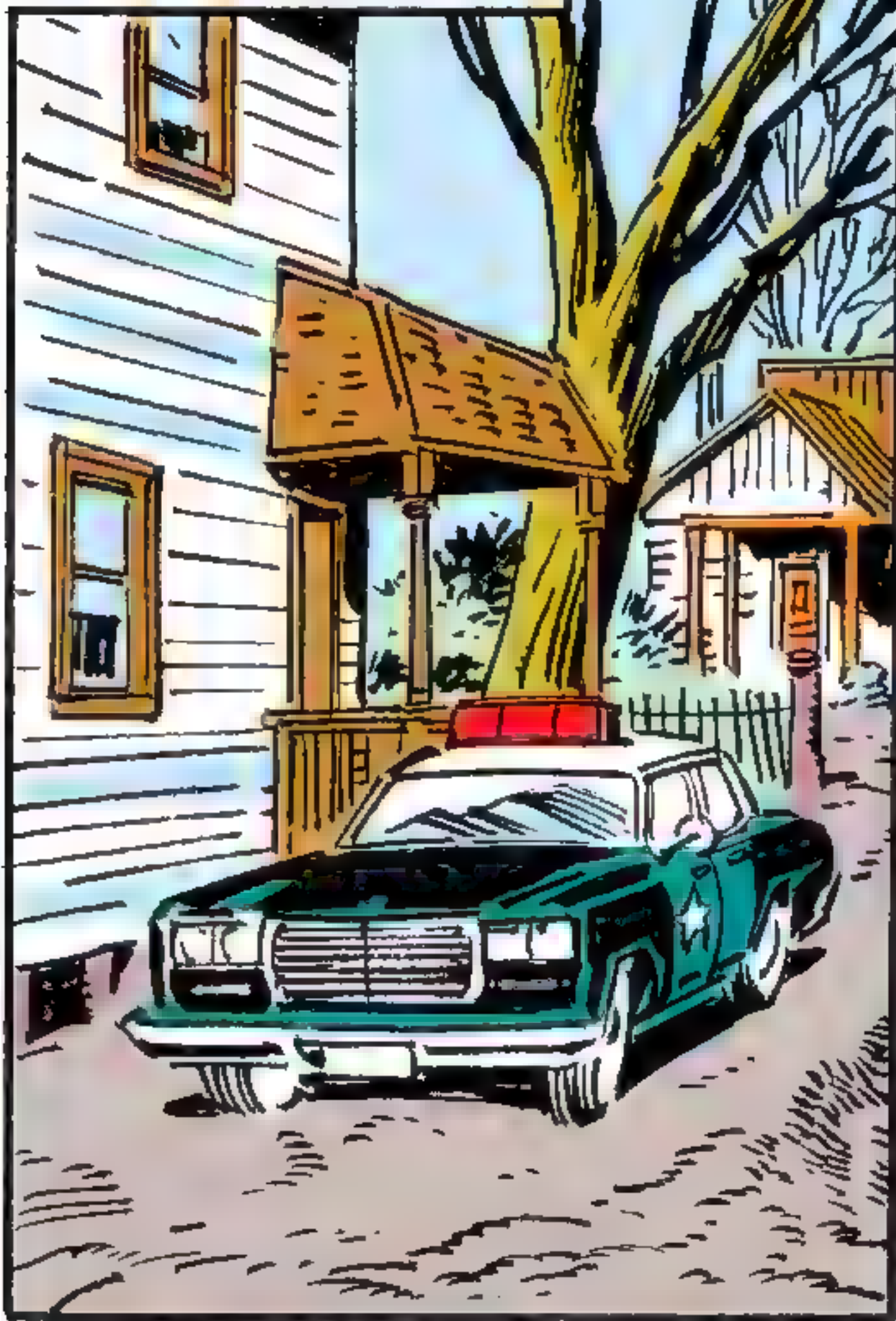








IT WAS TWO HOURS
LATER AT MA
STILLWELL'S PLACE...

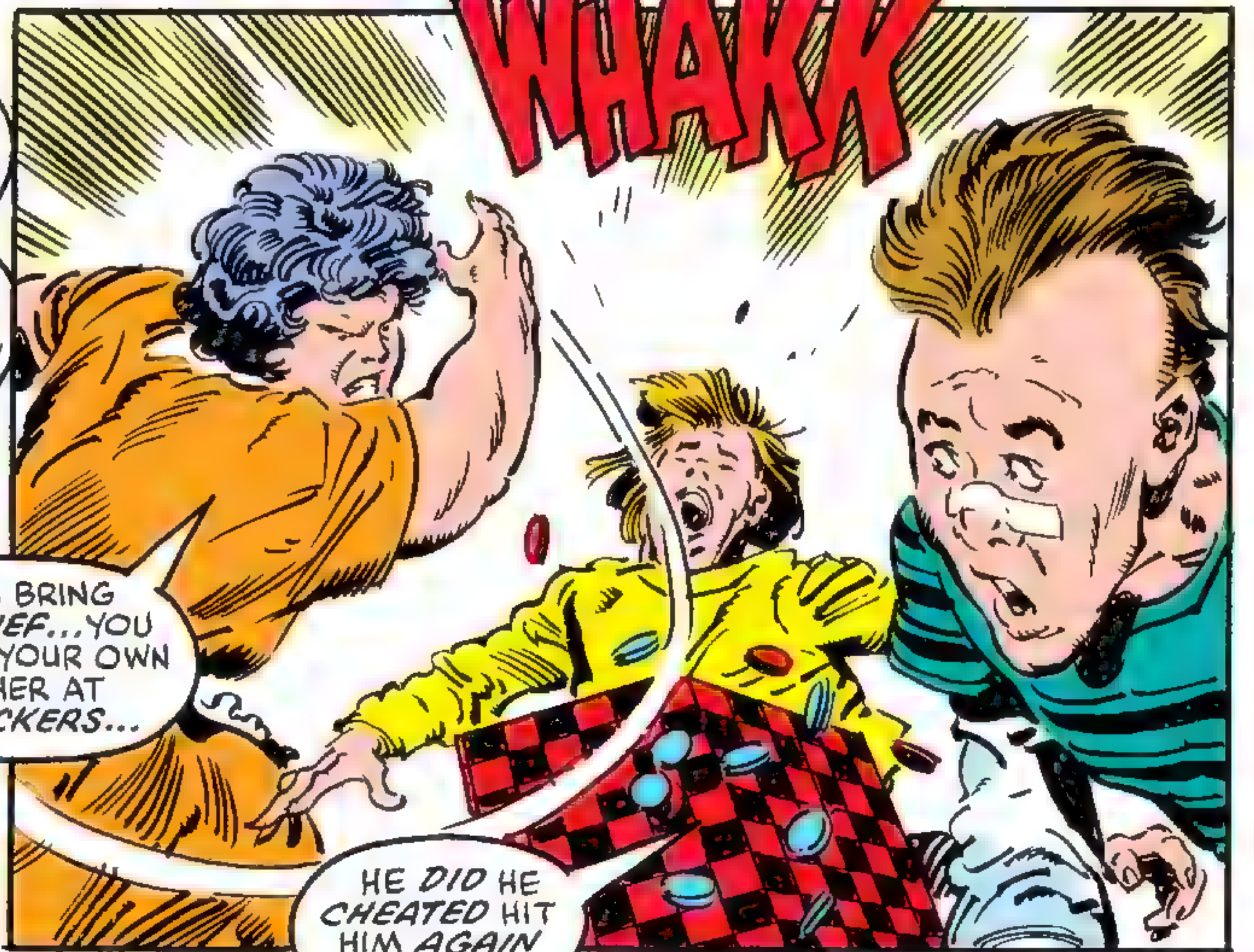


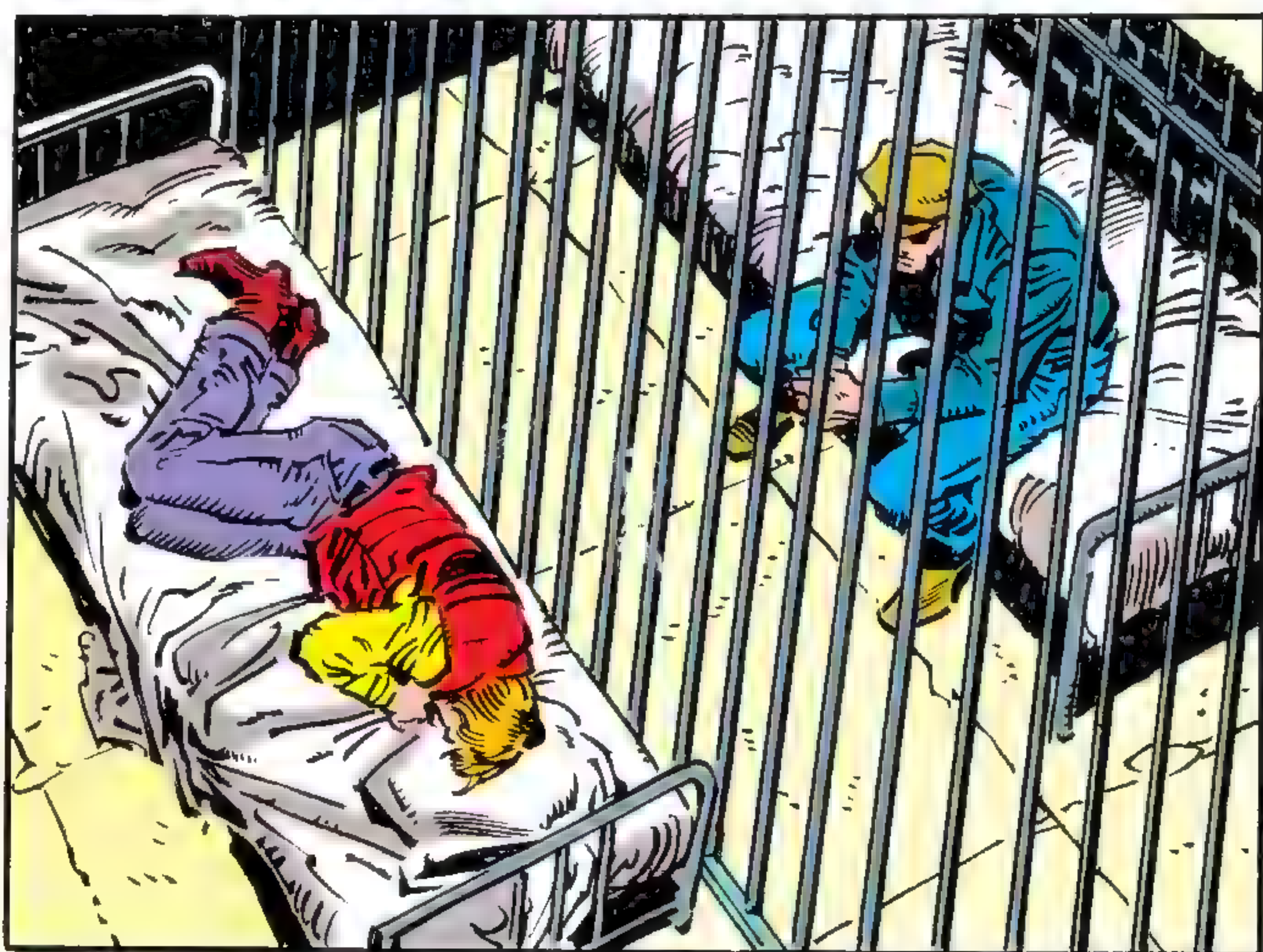
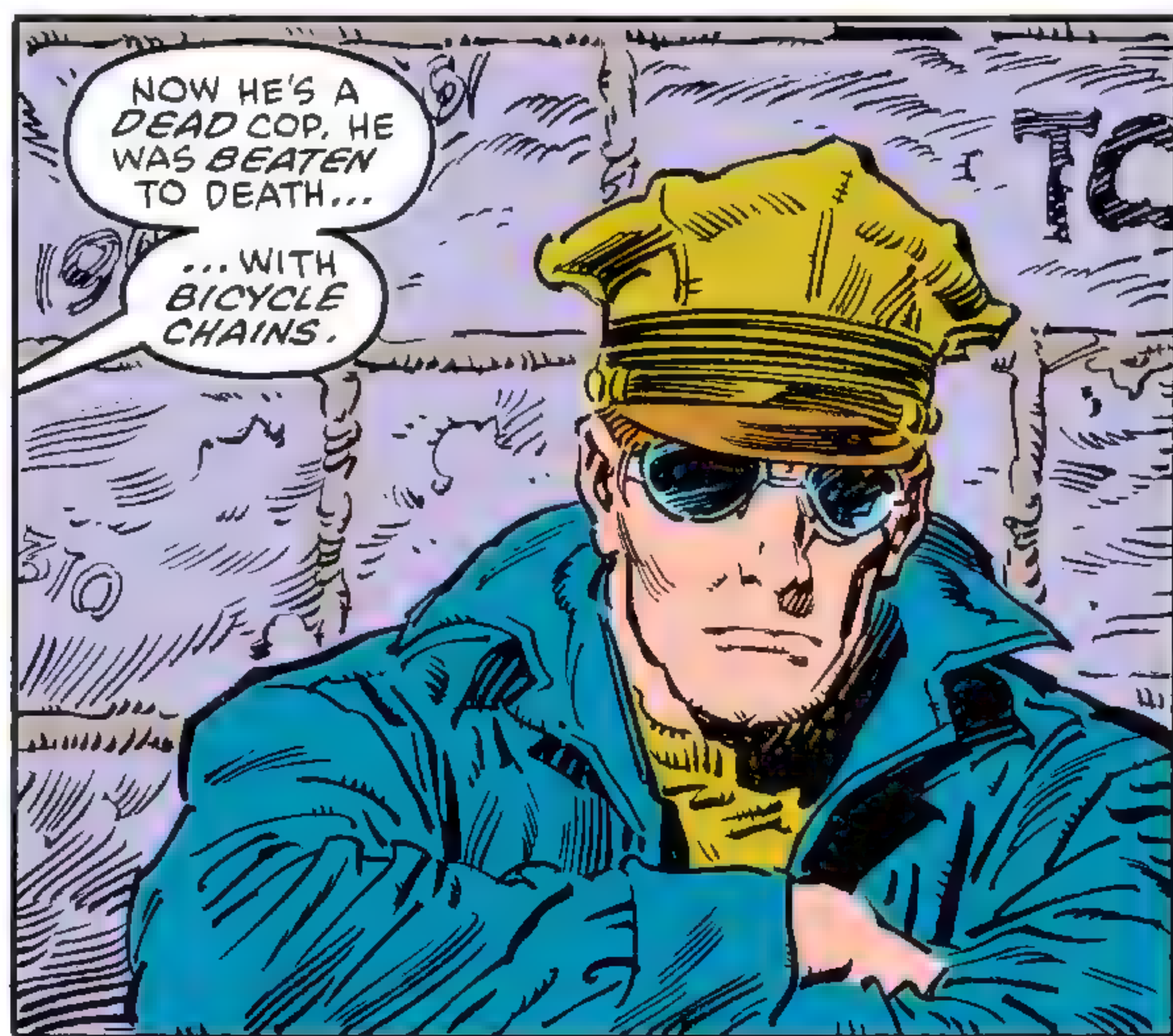
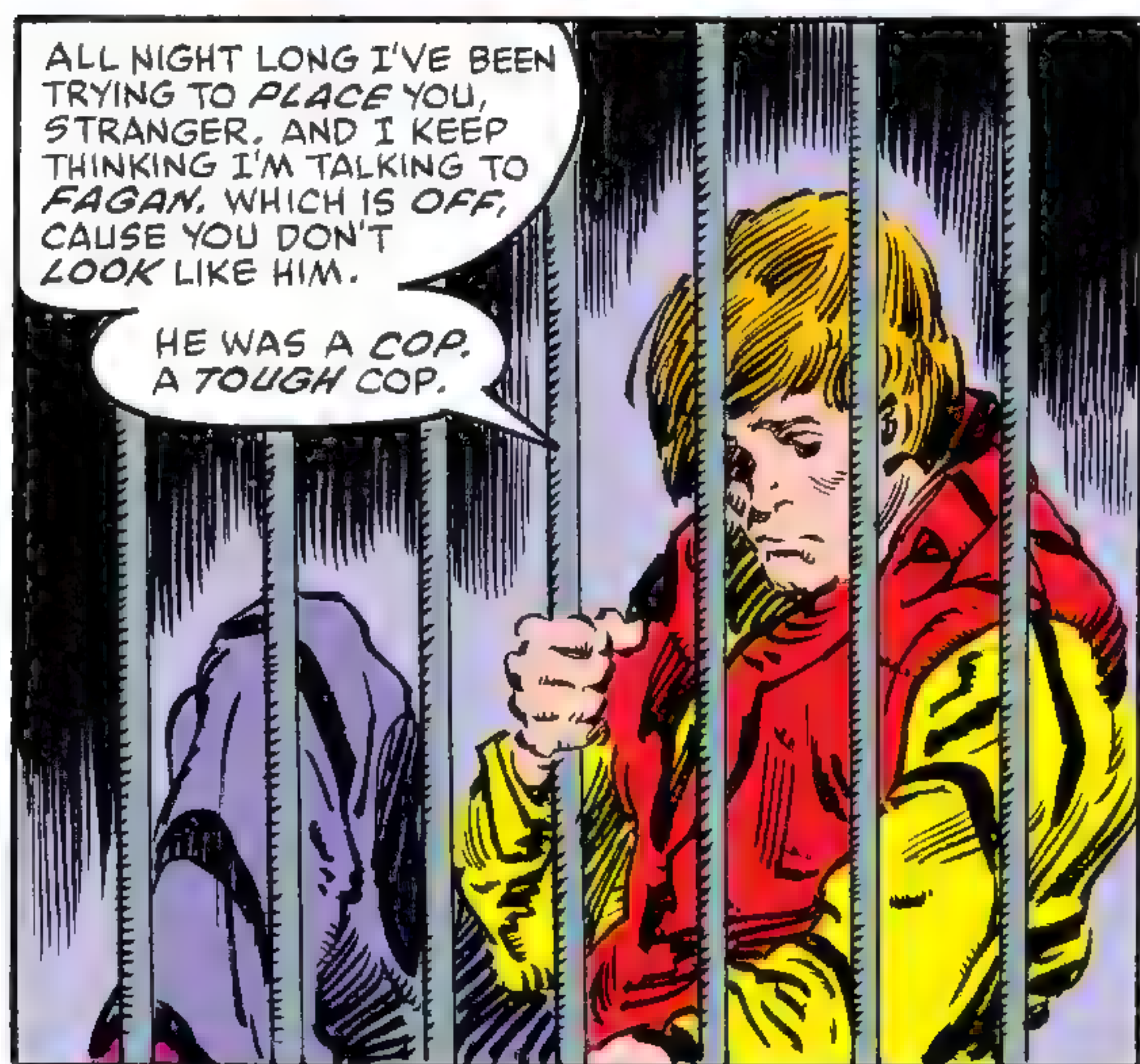
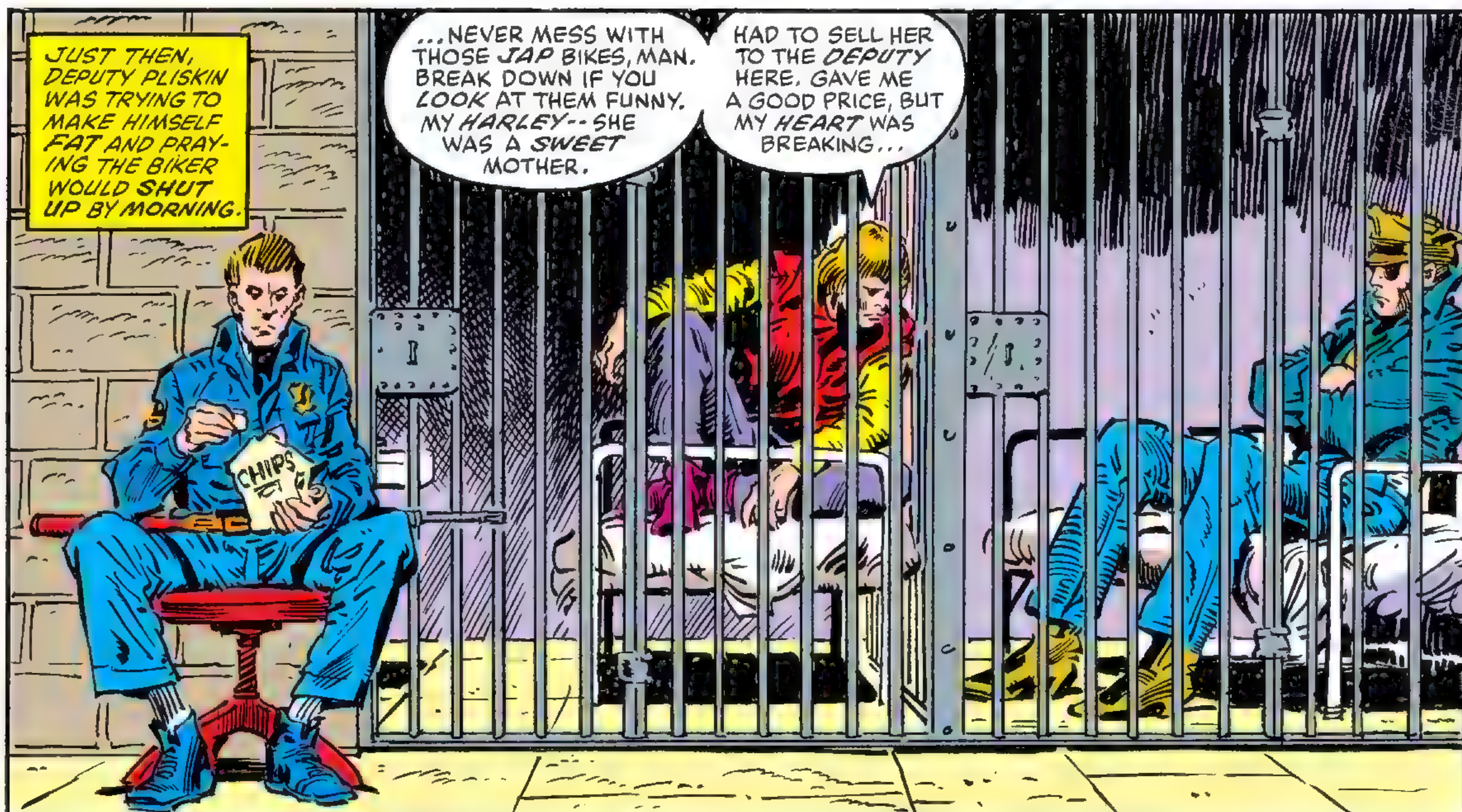
IT'S THAT STRANGER. HE'S... I DON'T KNOW, BUT THINGS ARE GETTING OUT OF HAND.

THERE WAS TALK OF FAGAN. AND THE STRANGER, HE SEEMED INTERESTED.

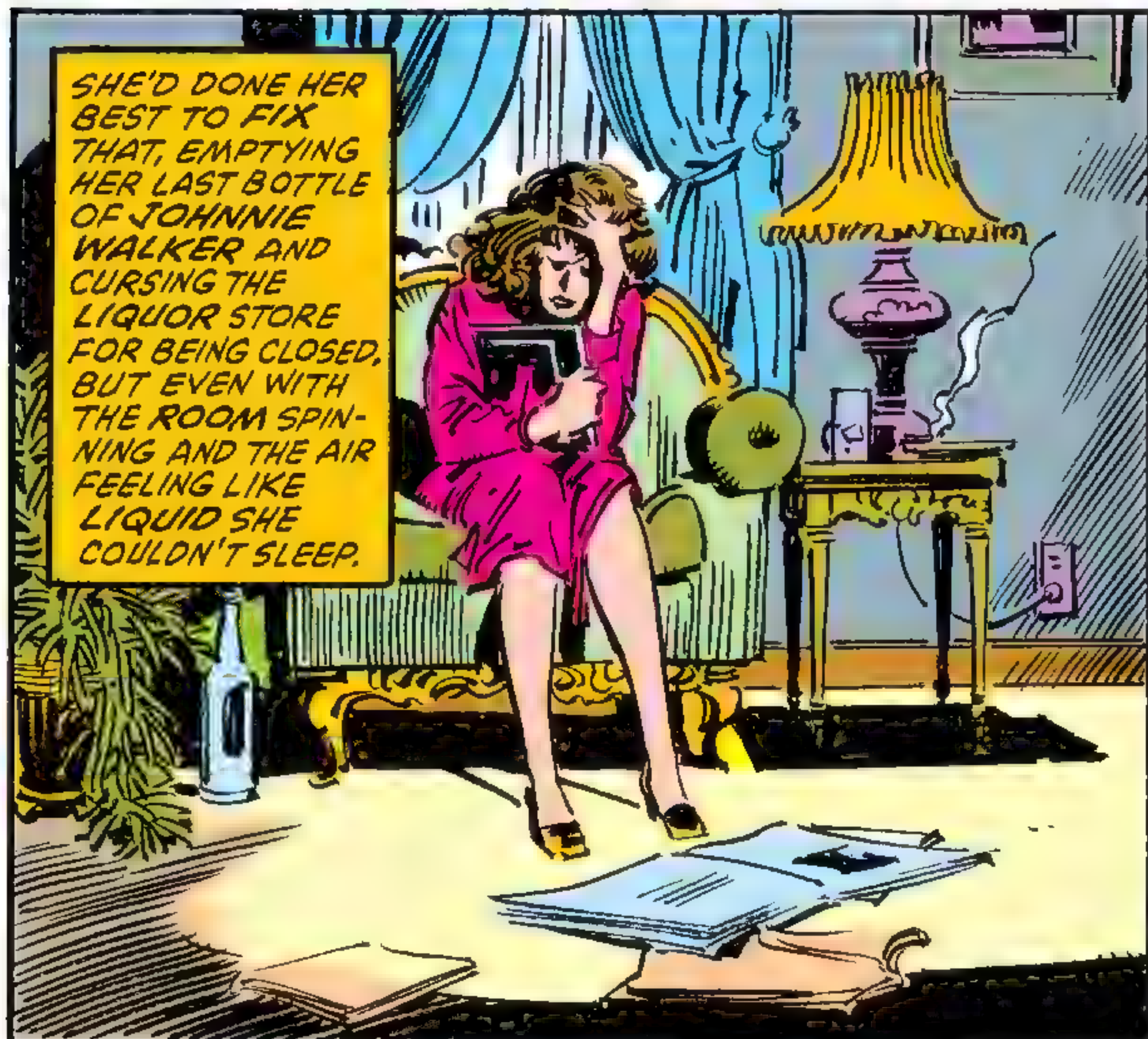
BILLY, BILLY, BILLY...

YOU BRING US GRIEF... YOU CHEAT YOUR OWN BROTHER AT CHECKERS...





THERE WASN'T MUCH NIGHT LEFT WHEN COSIE RAN OUT OF BOOZE. SHE'D WOKE UP CRYING AGAIN AND AS CLOSE TO SOBER AS SHE EVER GOT.

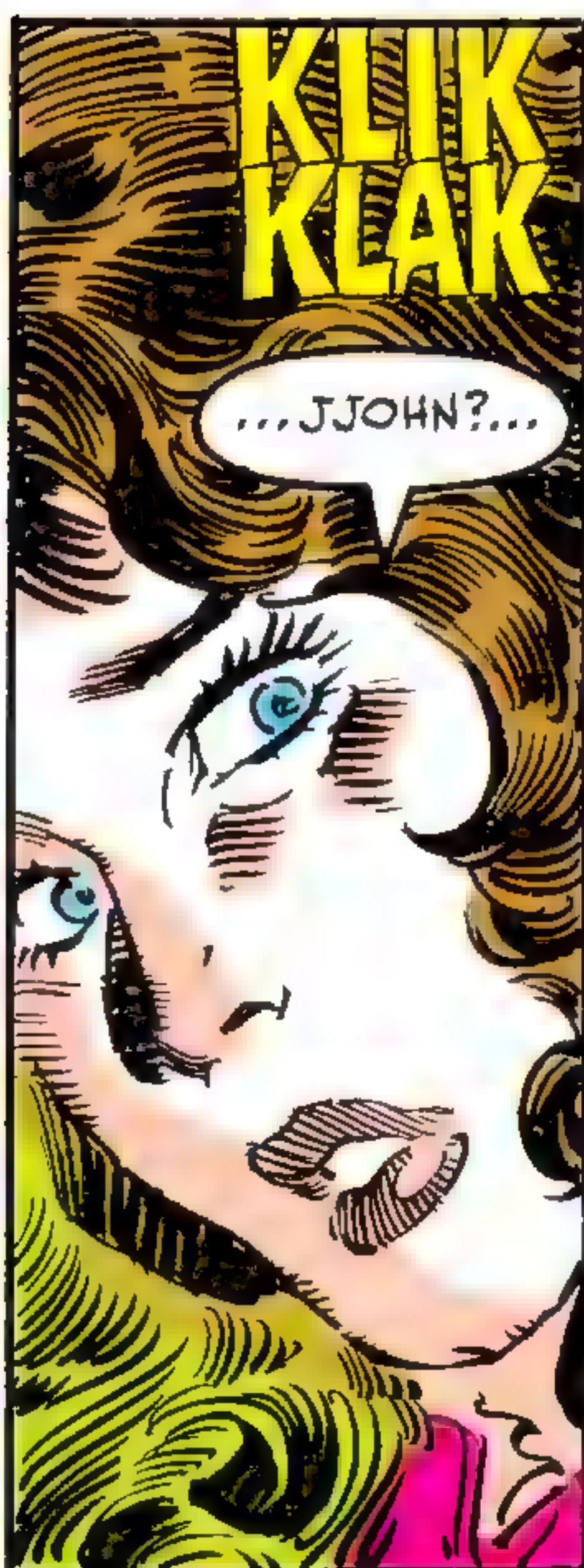


SHE'D DONE HER BEST TO FIX THAT, EMPTYING HER LAST BOTTLE OF JOHNNIE WALKER AND CURSING THE LIQUOR STORE FOR BEING CLOSED, BUT EVEN WITH THE ROOM SPINNING AND THE AIR FEELING LIKE LIQUID SHE COULDN'T SLEEP.

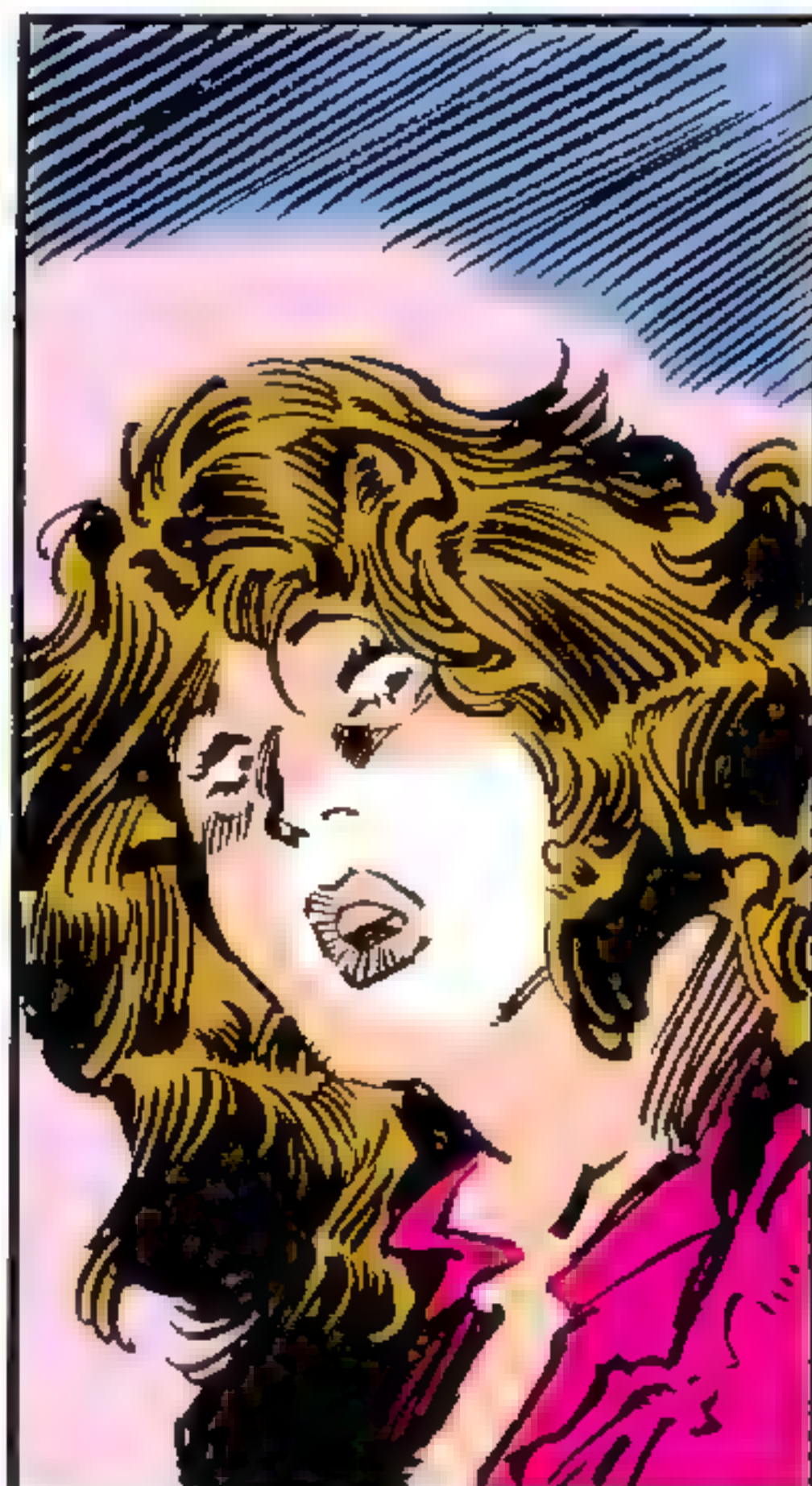
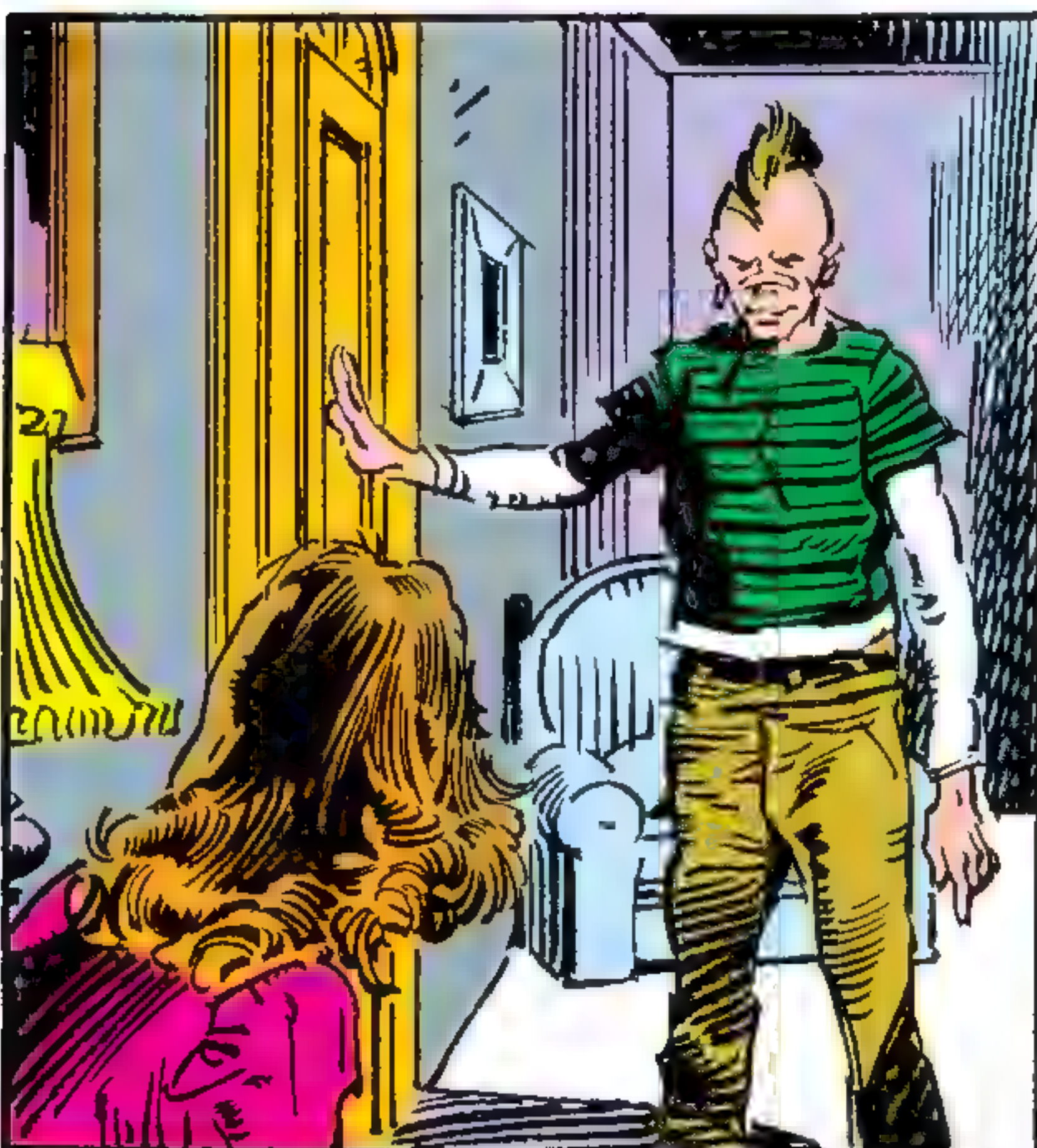
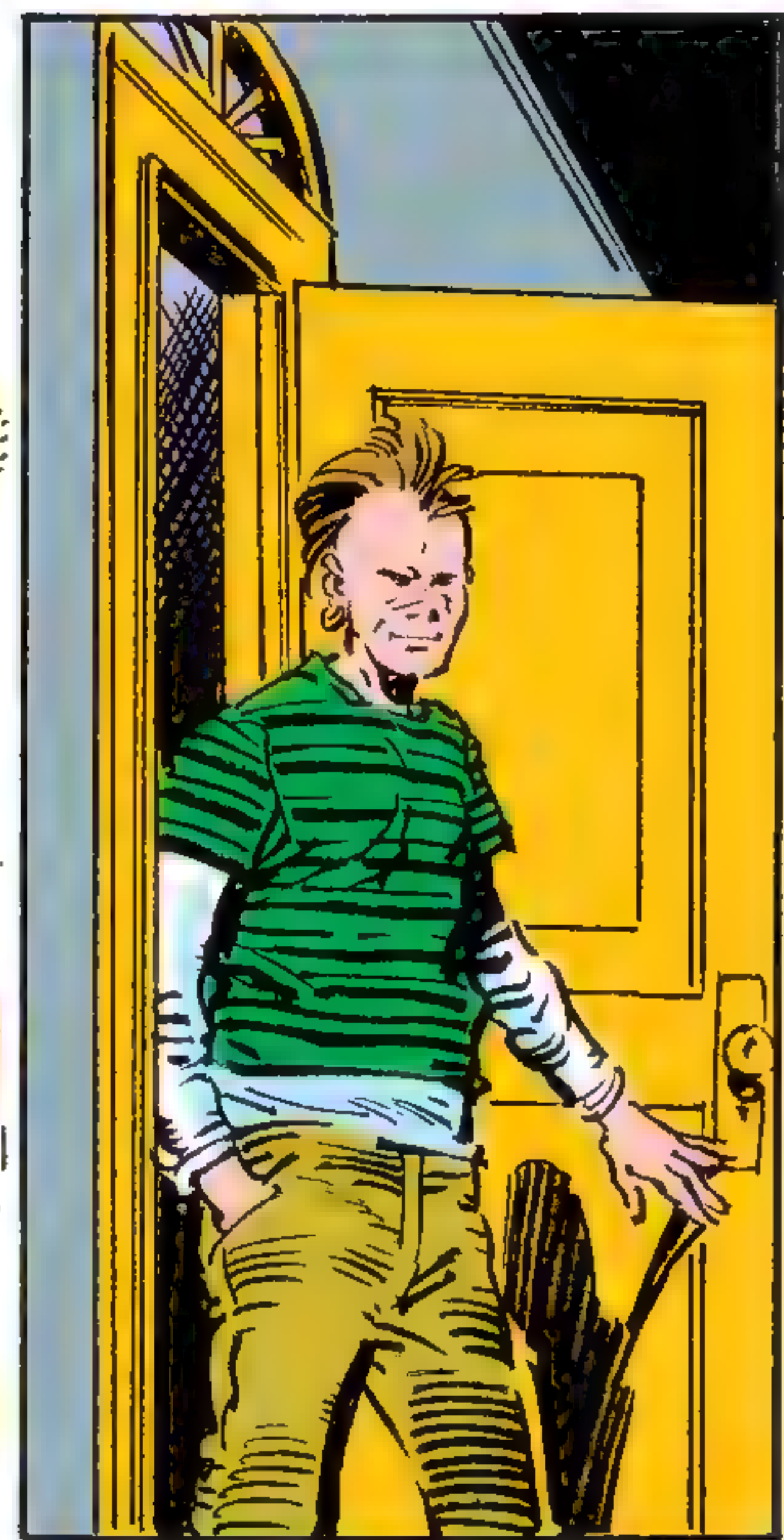
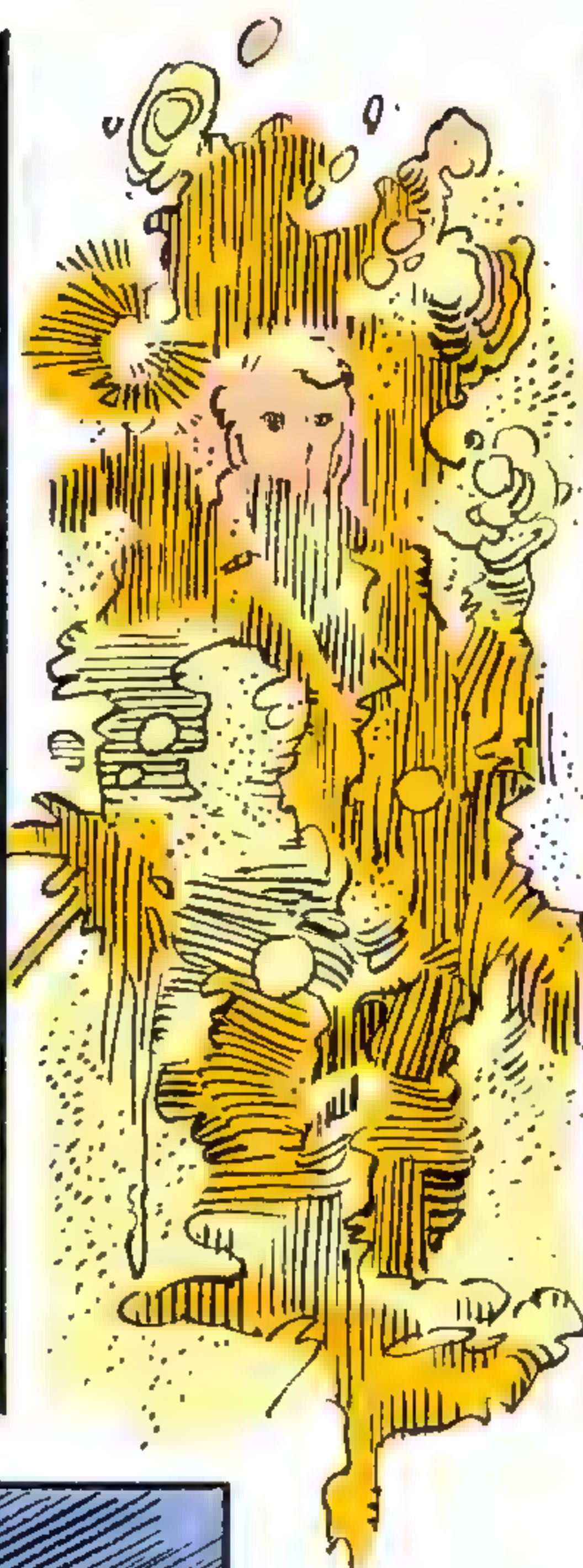
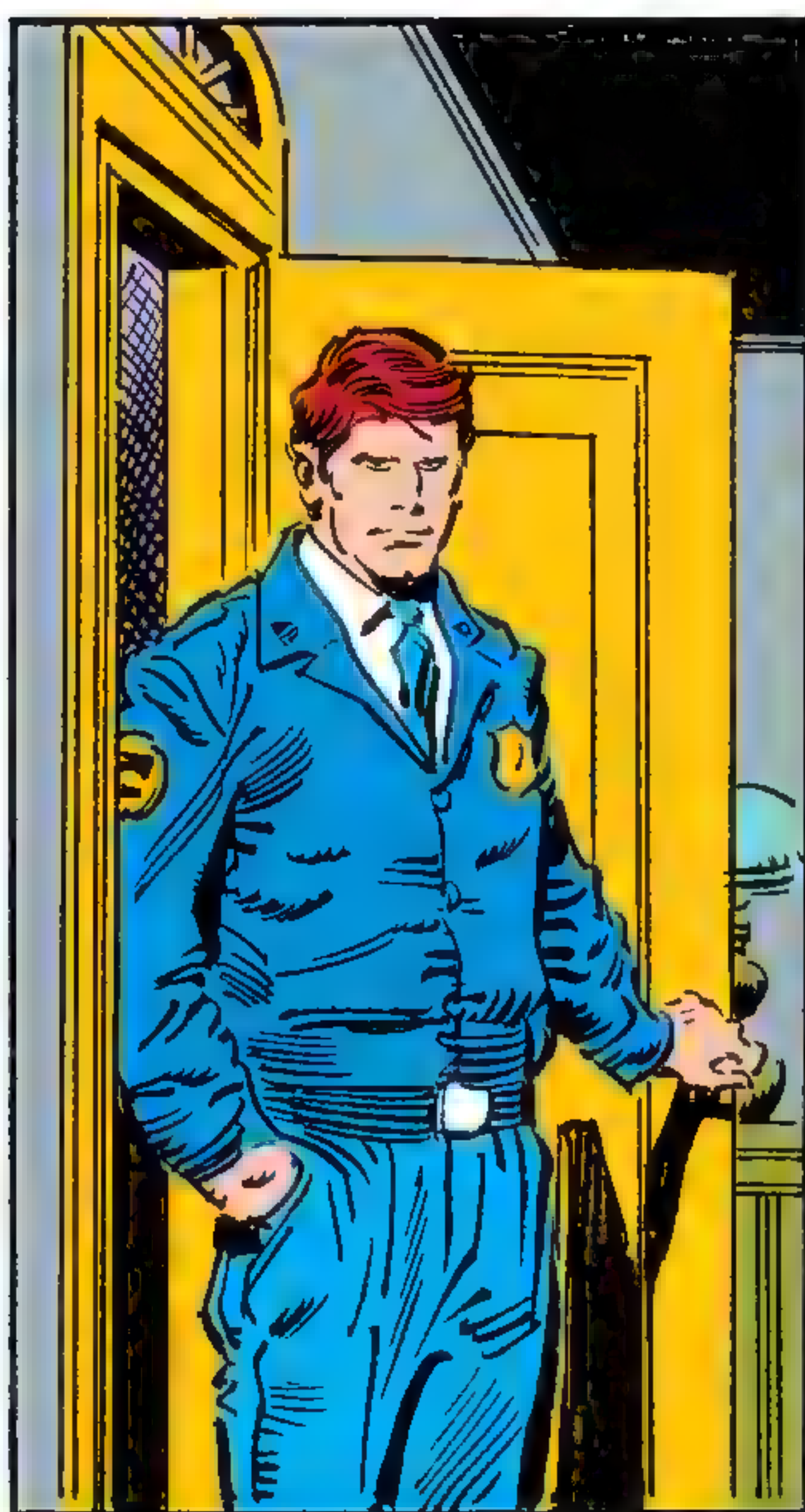
IT WAS ALL THE STRANGER'S FAULT, FOR STANDING LIKE HE DID, FOR SMILING LIKE HE'D NEVER BEEN AFRAID

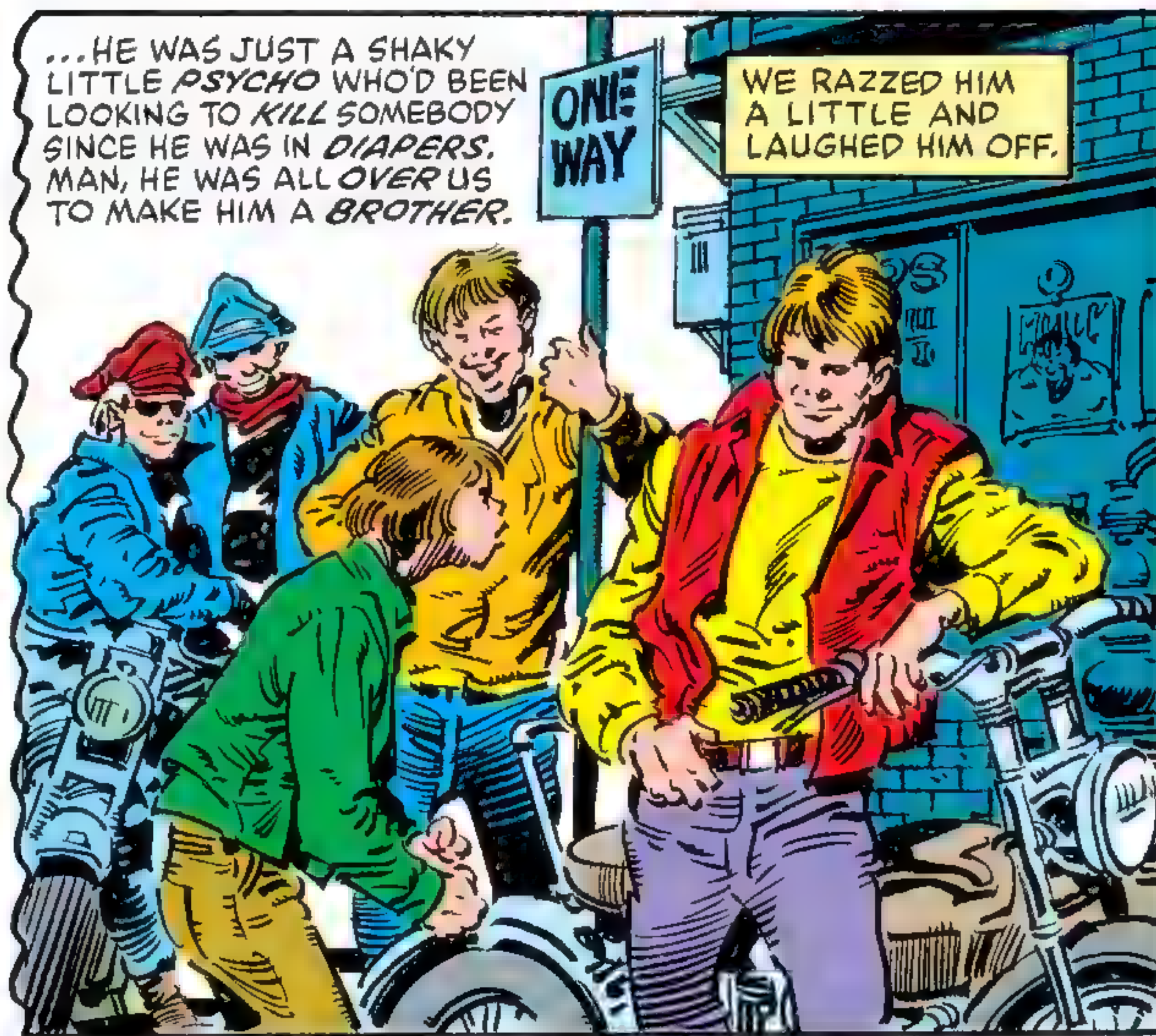
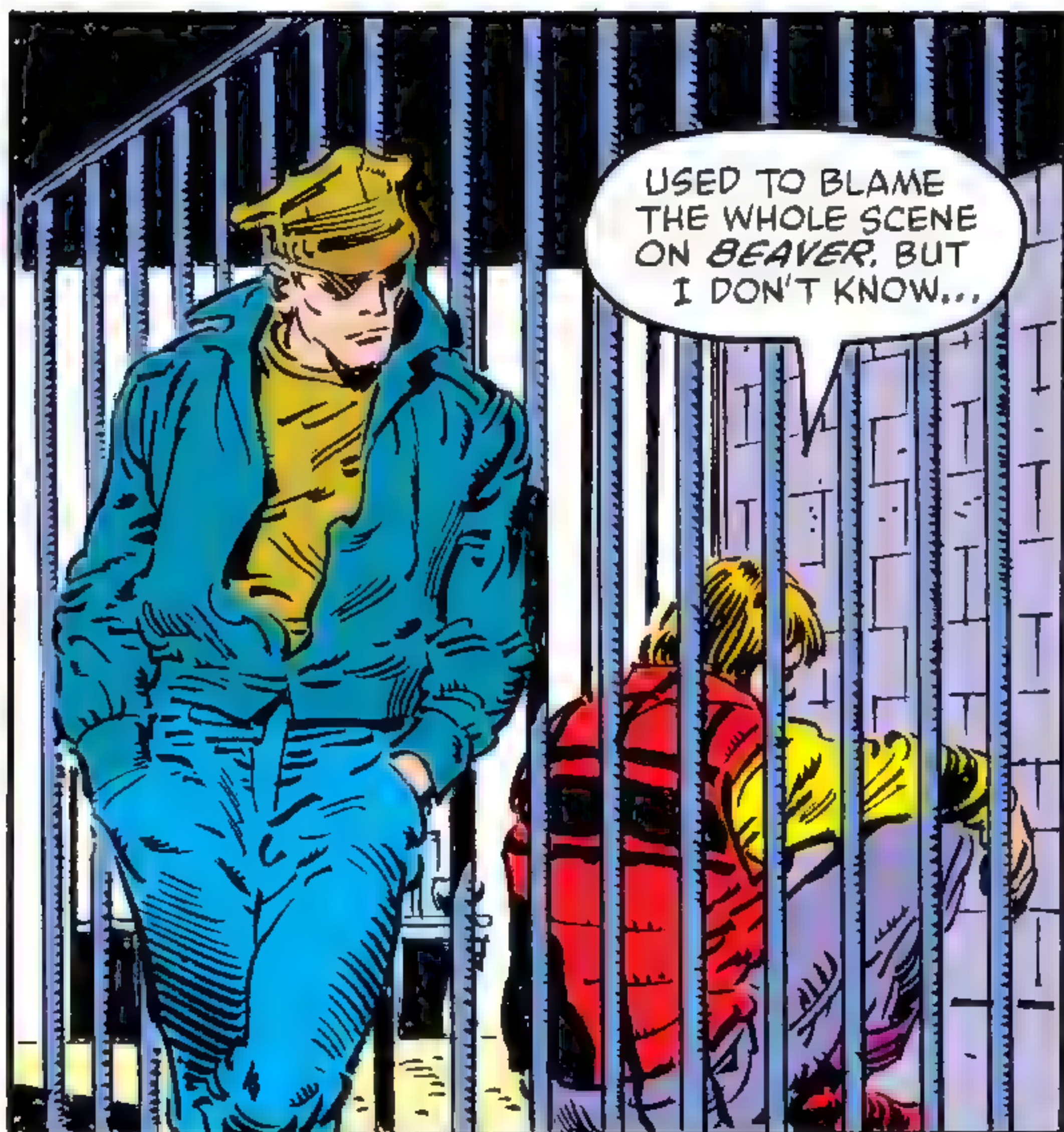
SHE'D LAIN IN BED COUNTING SHEEP, THEN SHE'D TRIED COUNTING MEN.

BUT THE SAME ONE KEPT POPPING UP.



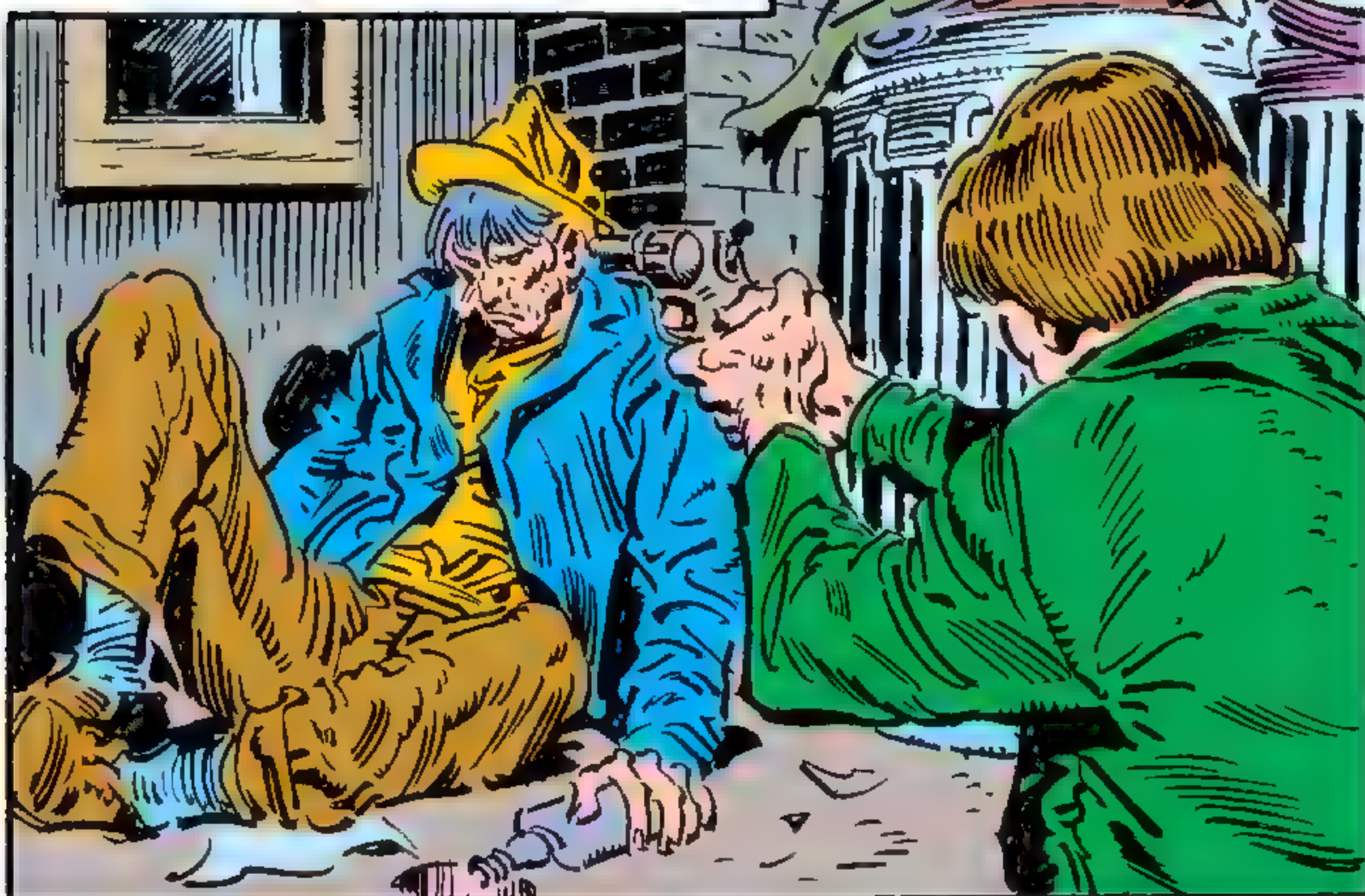
...JJOHN?...





AFTER IT ALL WENT DOWN, I BLAMED MA STILLWELL, FOR LEAVING THAT THIRTY-EIGHT WHERE HE COULD FIND IT. SHE SHOULD'VE KNOWN HE WAS SPACED ENOUGH TO FROST A WINO JUST TO PROVE HE HAD THE NERVE.

BUT LIKE I SAID, I DON'T KNOW. TEN YEARS OF SMELLING THIS TOWN, AND I'M THINKING WHAT HAPPENED HAD TO.

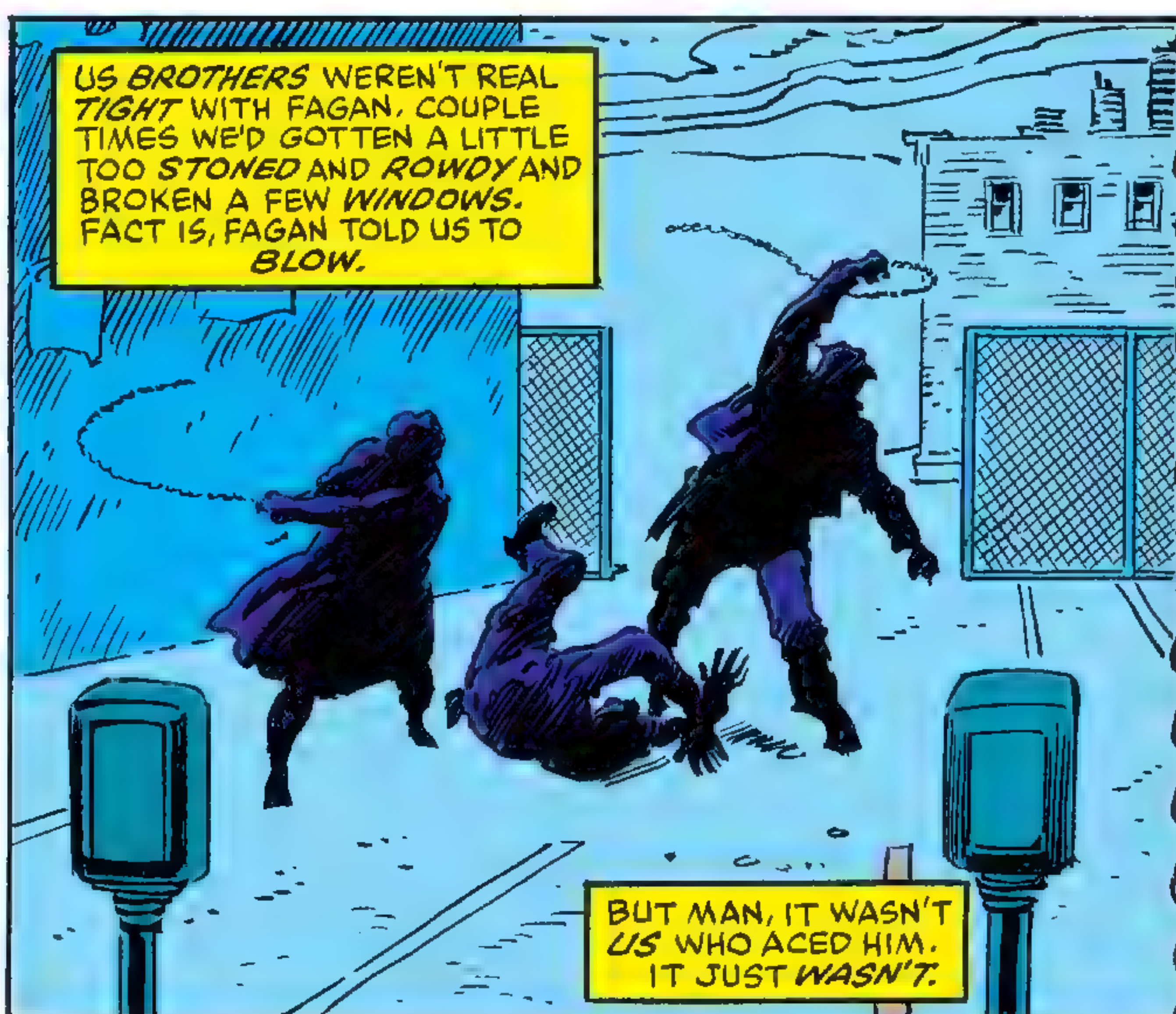


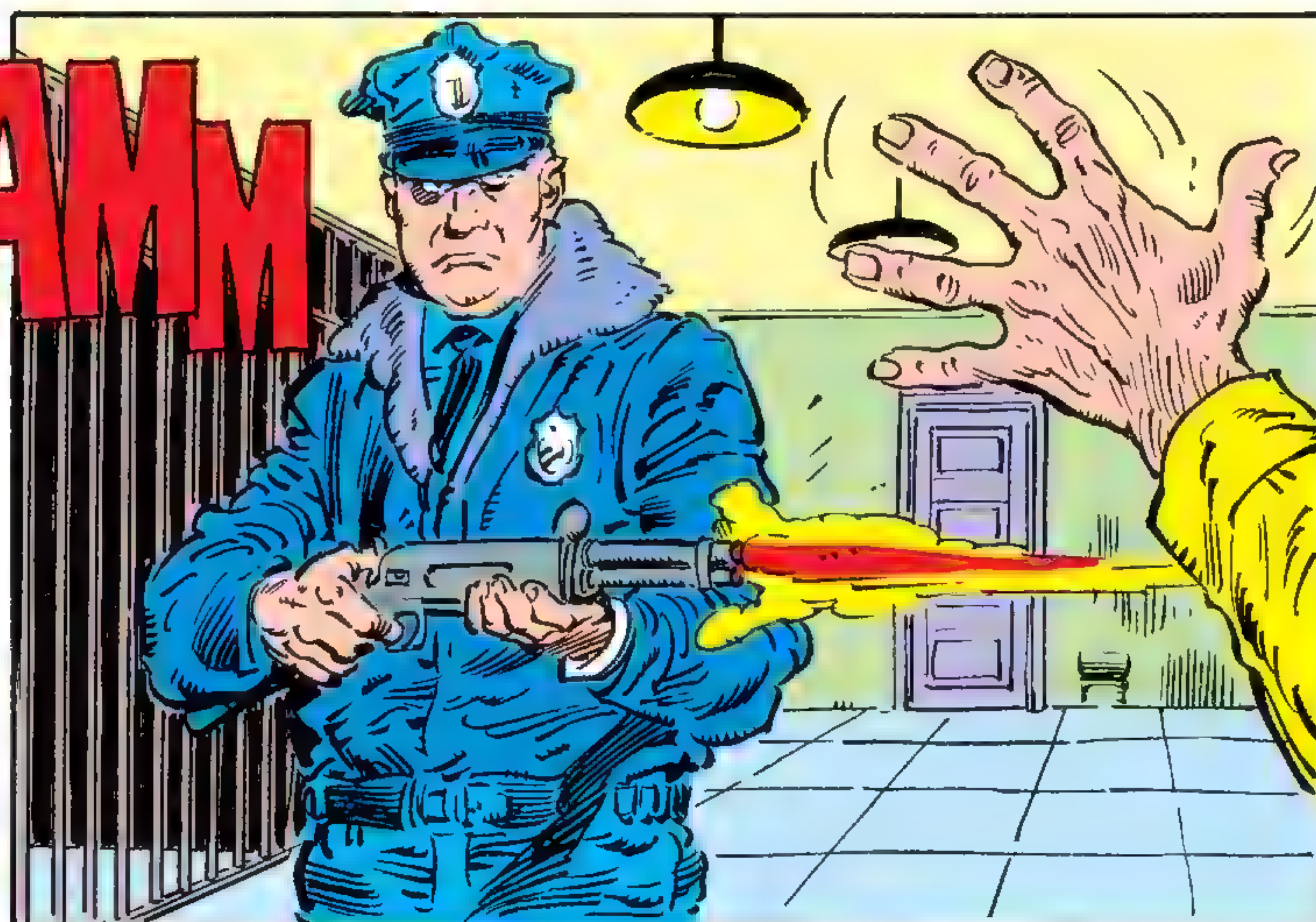
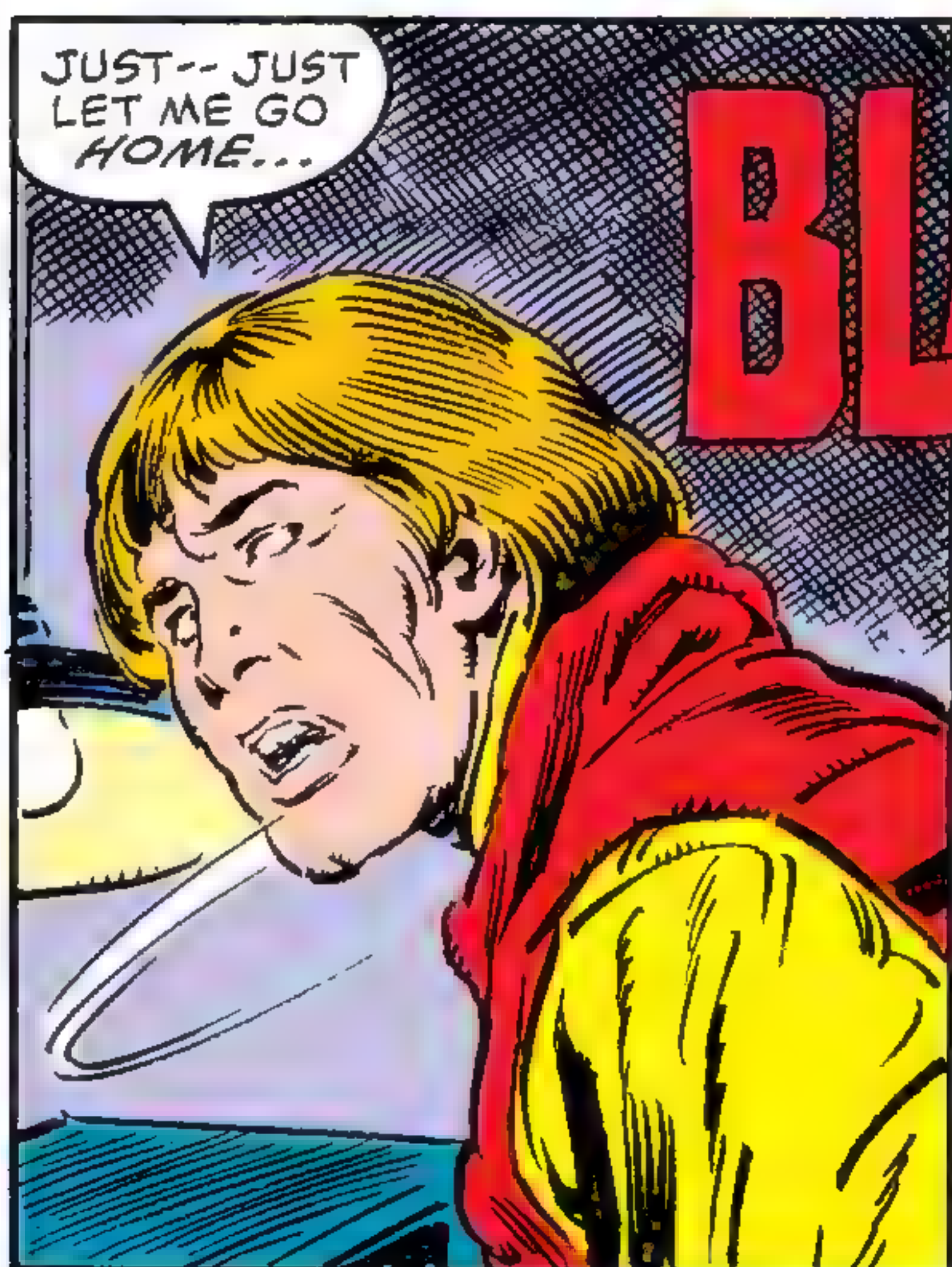
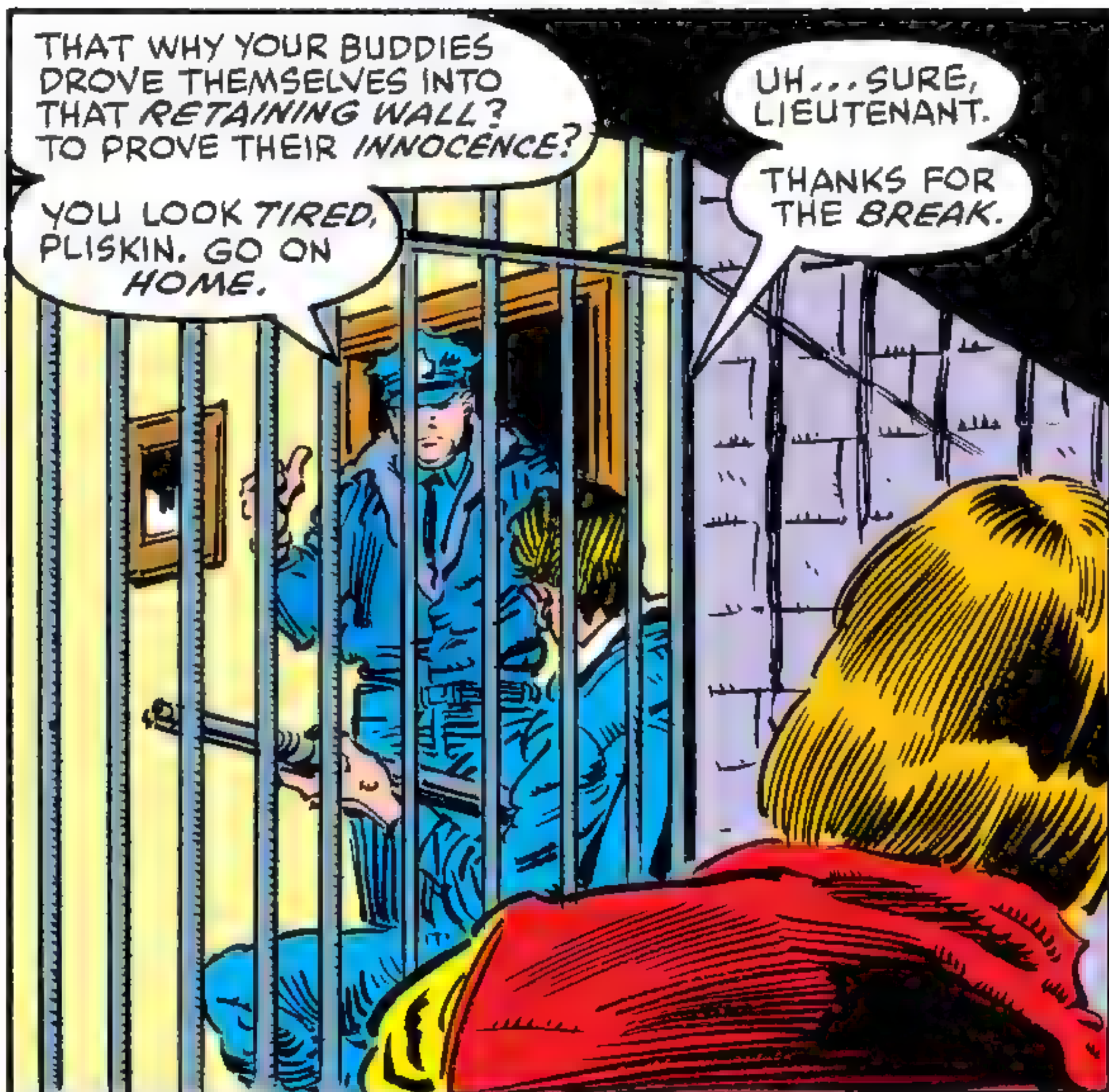
MAYBE I SHOULD PUT IT ON FAGAN FOR BEING SO STRAIGHT. FOR TRYING TO MAKE BROKEN CROSS LESS OF A HOLE.

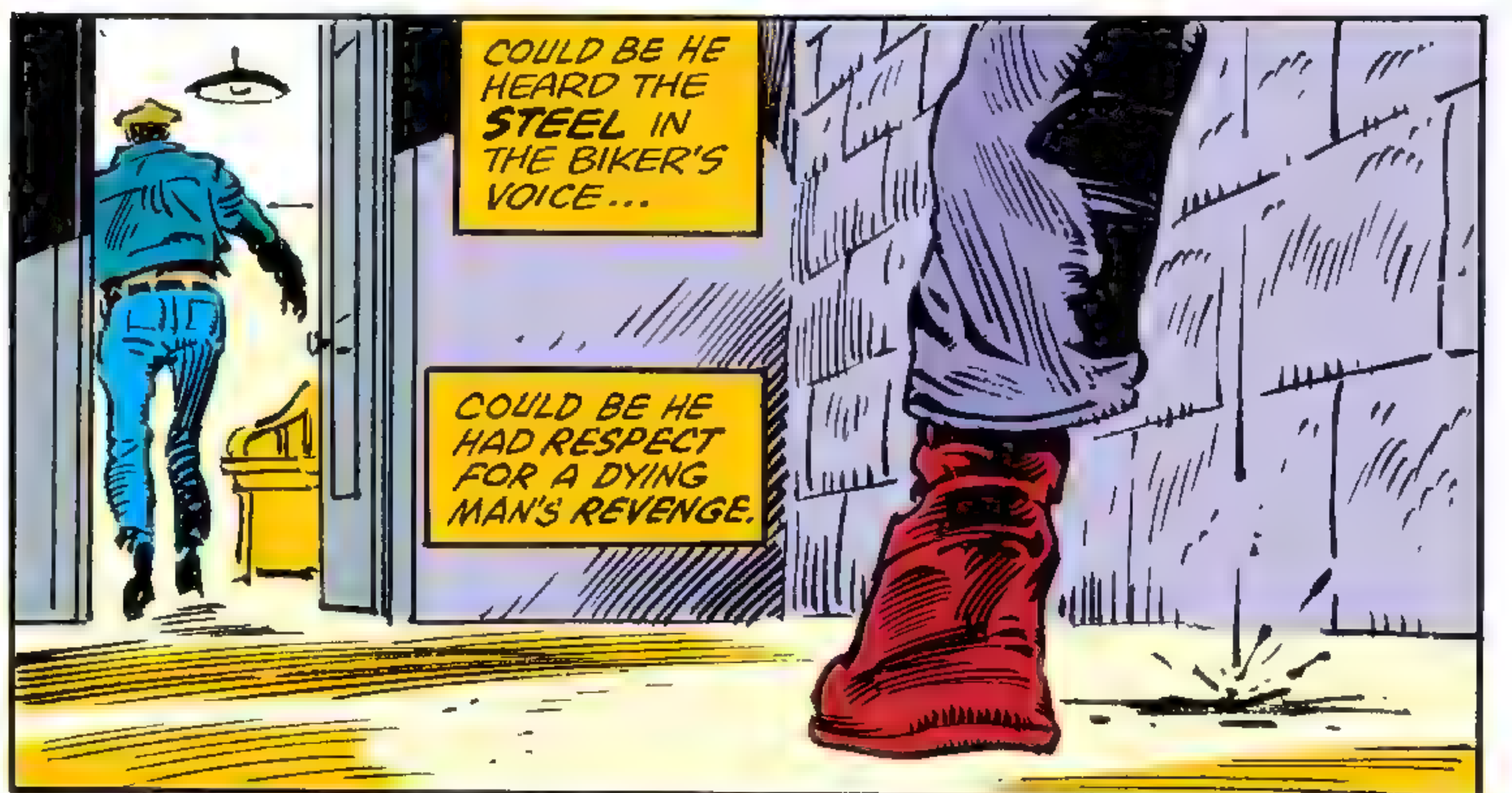
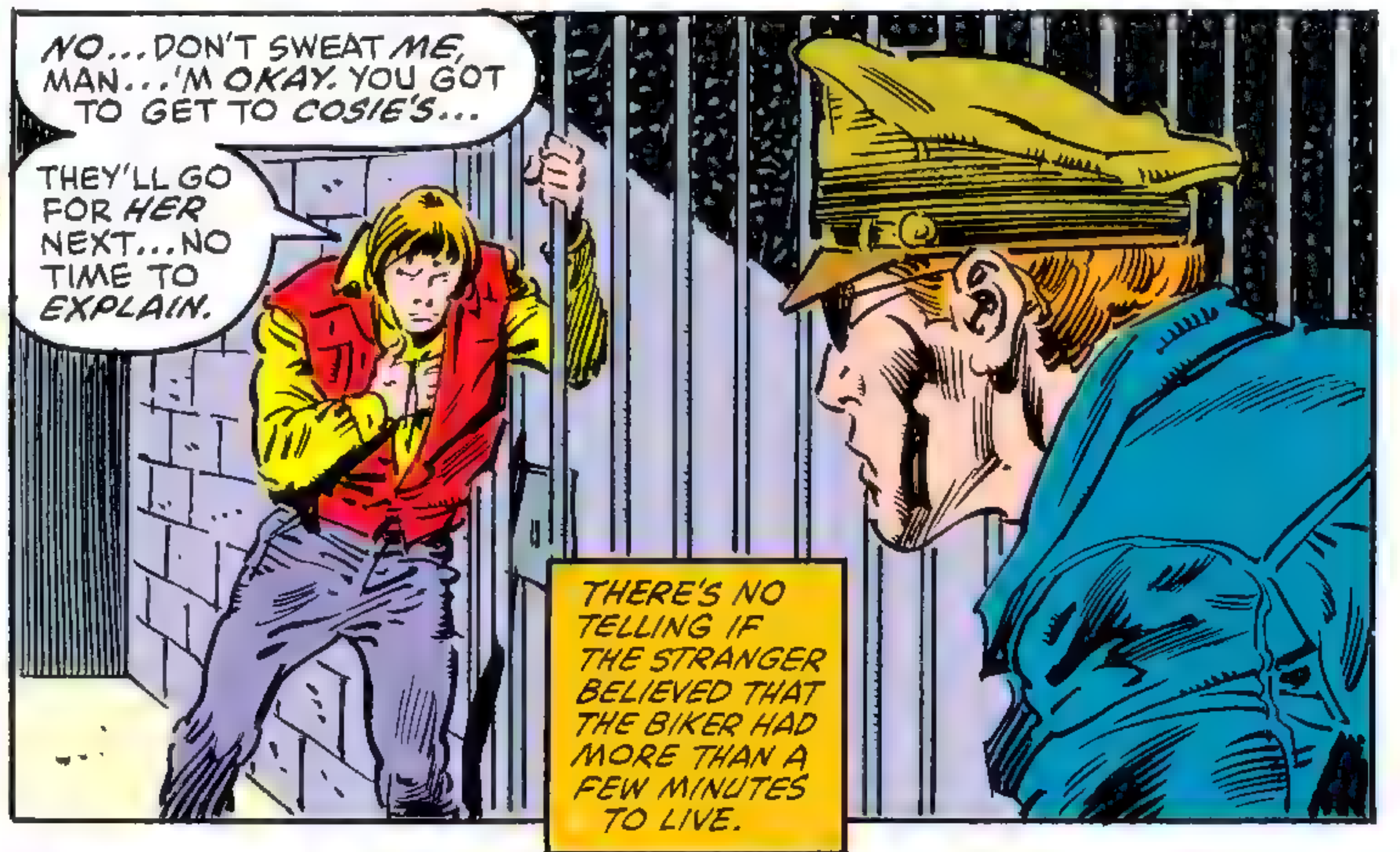
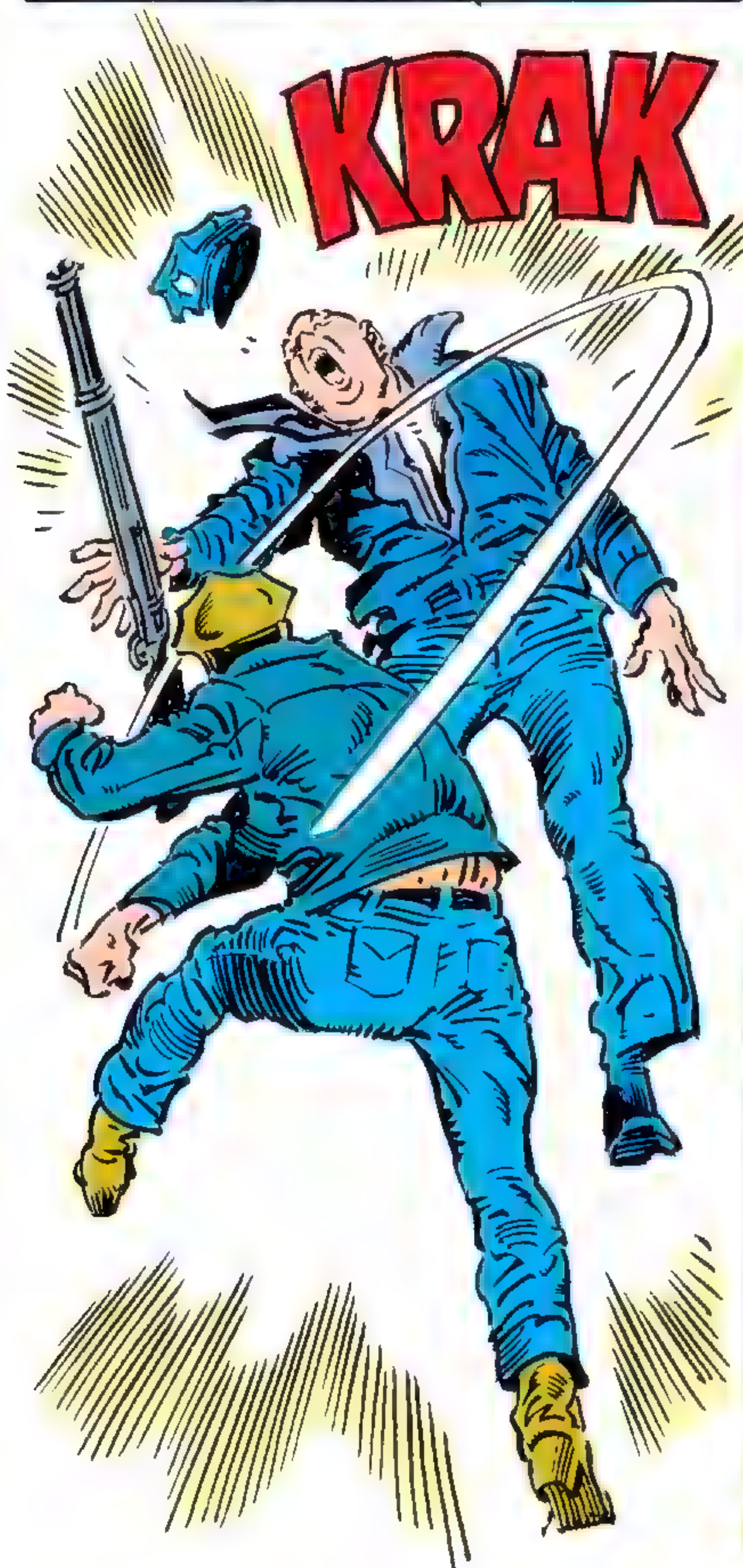
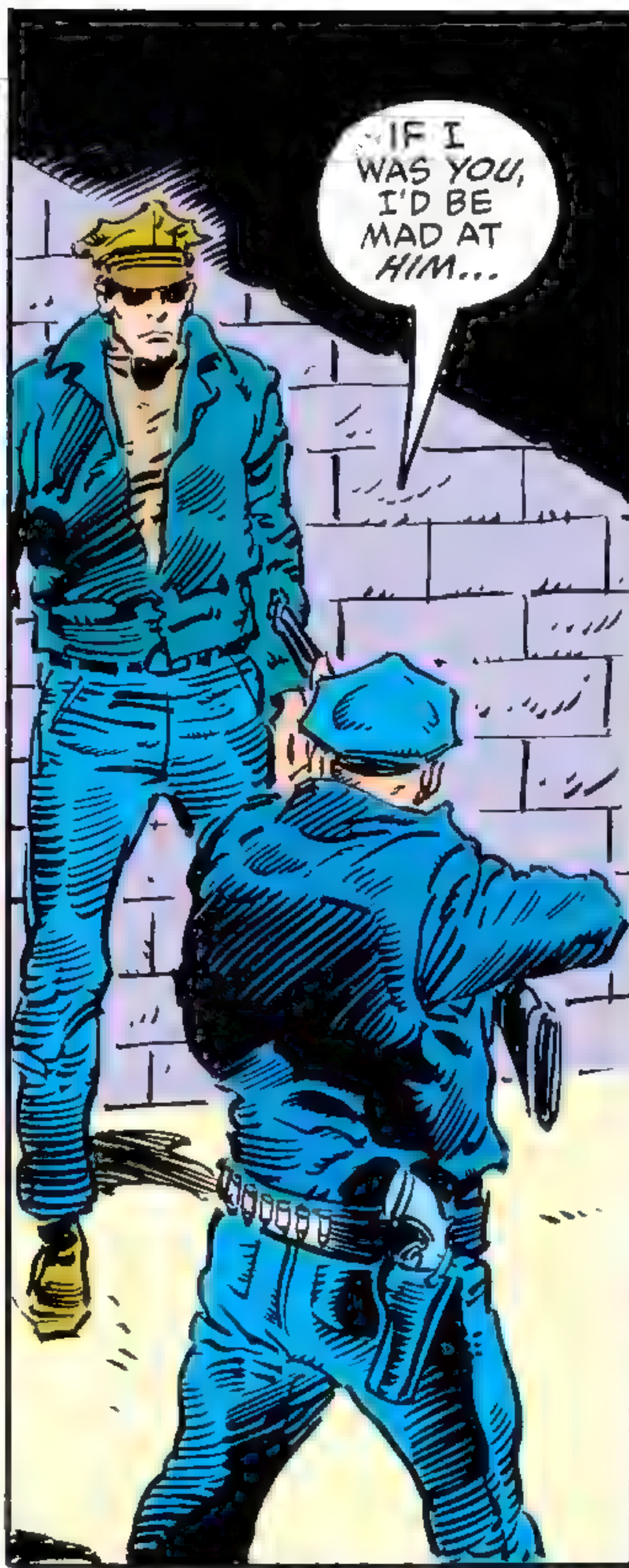


HE WAS CLOSE TO NAILING BEAVER WHEN MA STILLWELL TRIED TO LAY A BRIBE ON HIM. ONE LOOK AT FAGAN AND YOU'D KNOW HOW DUMB THAT WAS.

COSTELLO HAD HIS PIECE OF IT, TOO. HE'D BEEN SITTING ON A TACK EVER SINCE HE LOST THE TOP COP JOB TO AN OUT-OF-TOWNER--AND STILLWELL, SHE PLAYED HIM LIKE AN ACCORDION...

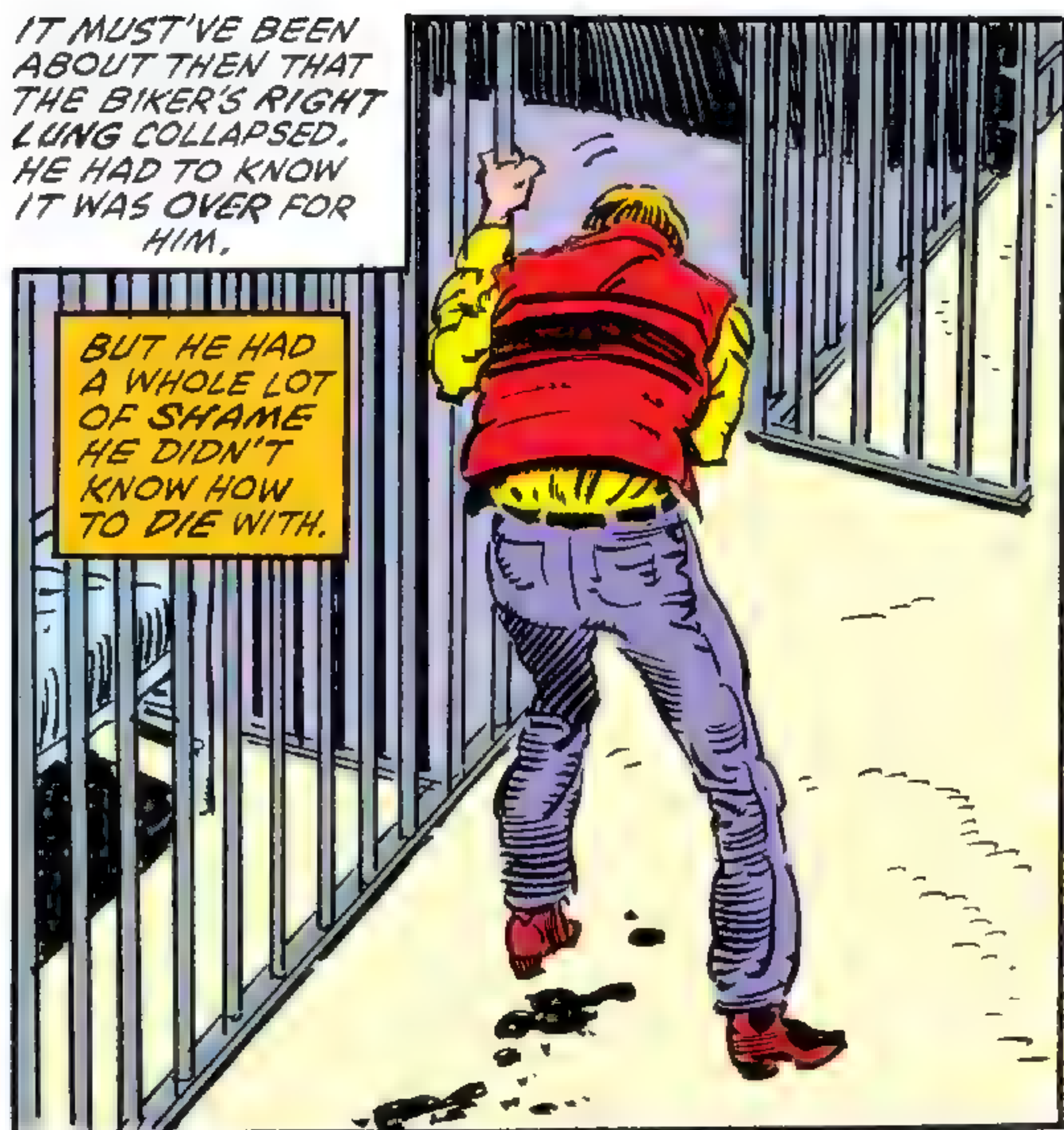




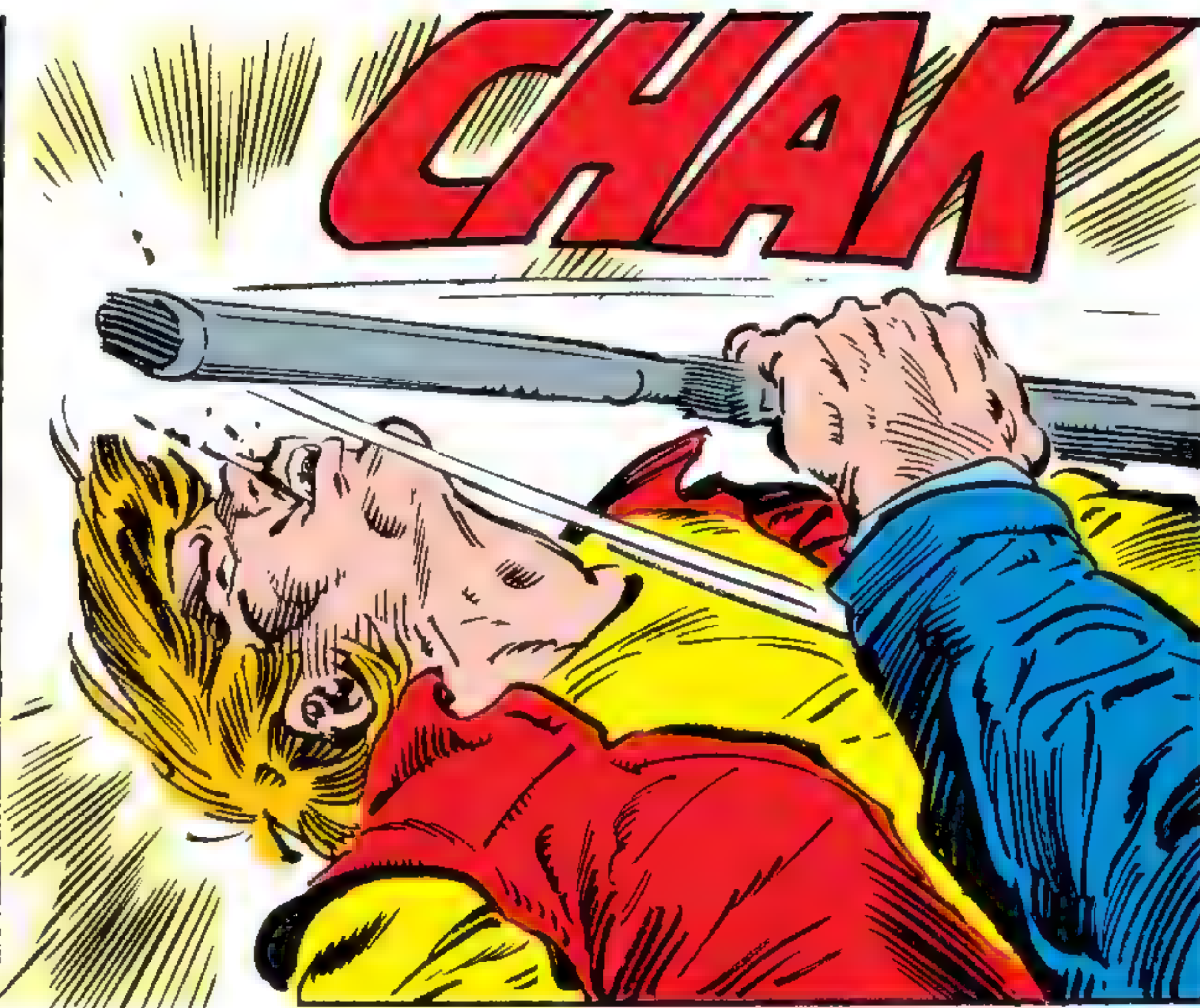


IT MUST'VE BEEN ABOUT THEN THAT THE BIKER'S RIGHT LUNG COLLAPSED. HE HAD TO KNOW IT WAS OVER FOR HIM.

BUT HE HAD A WHOLE LOT OF SHAME HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DIE WITH.



CHAK

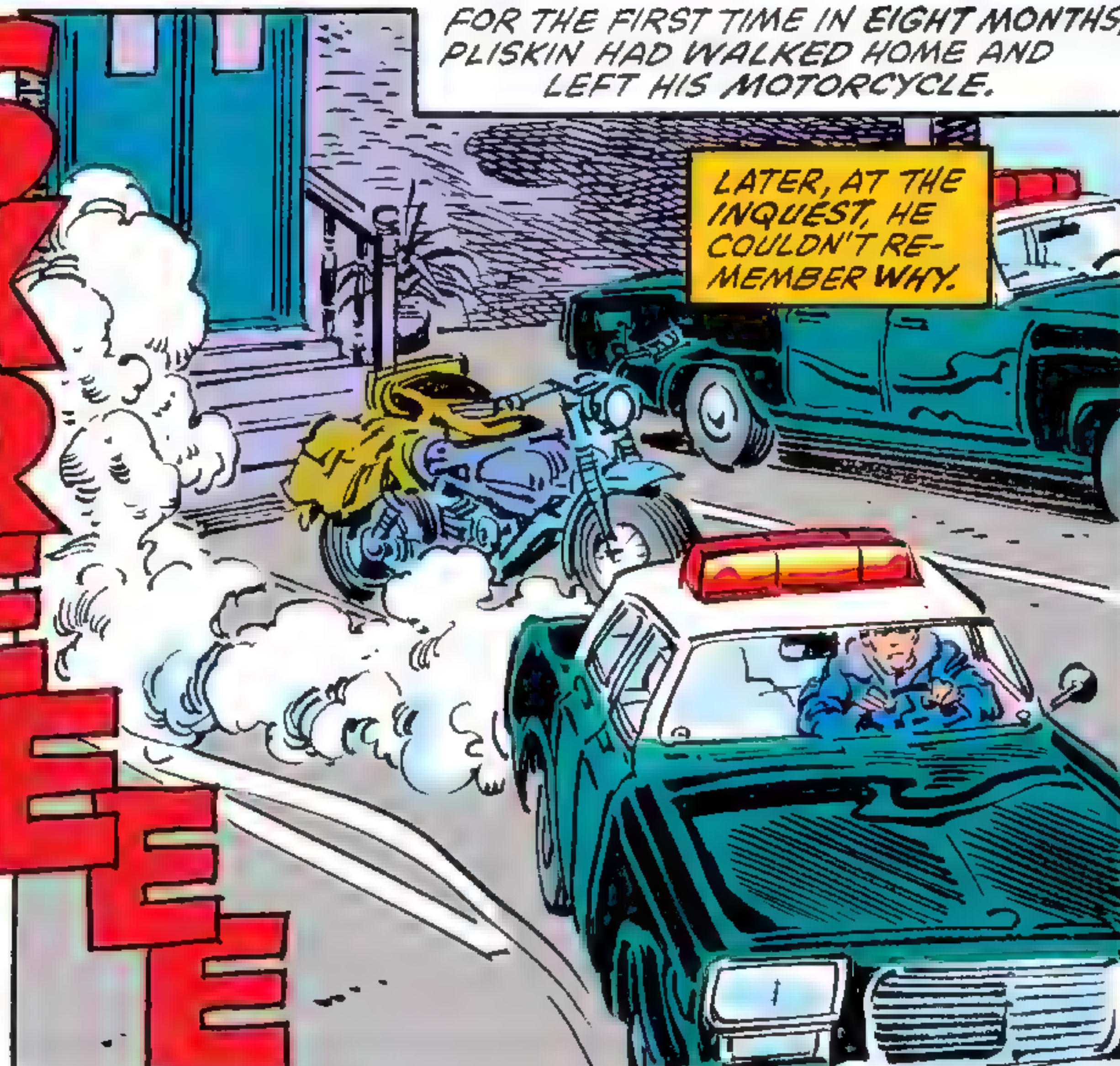


FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EIGHT MONTHS, PLISKIN HAD WALKED HOME AND LEFT HIS MOTORCYCLE.

LATER, AT THE INQUEST, HE COULDN'T REMEMBER WHY.

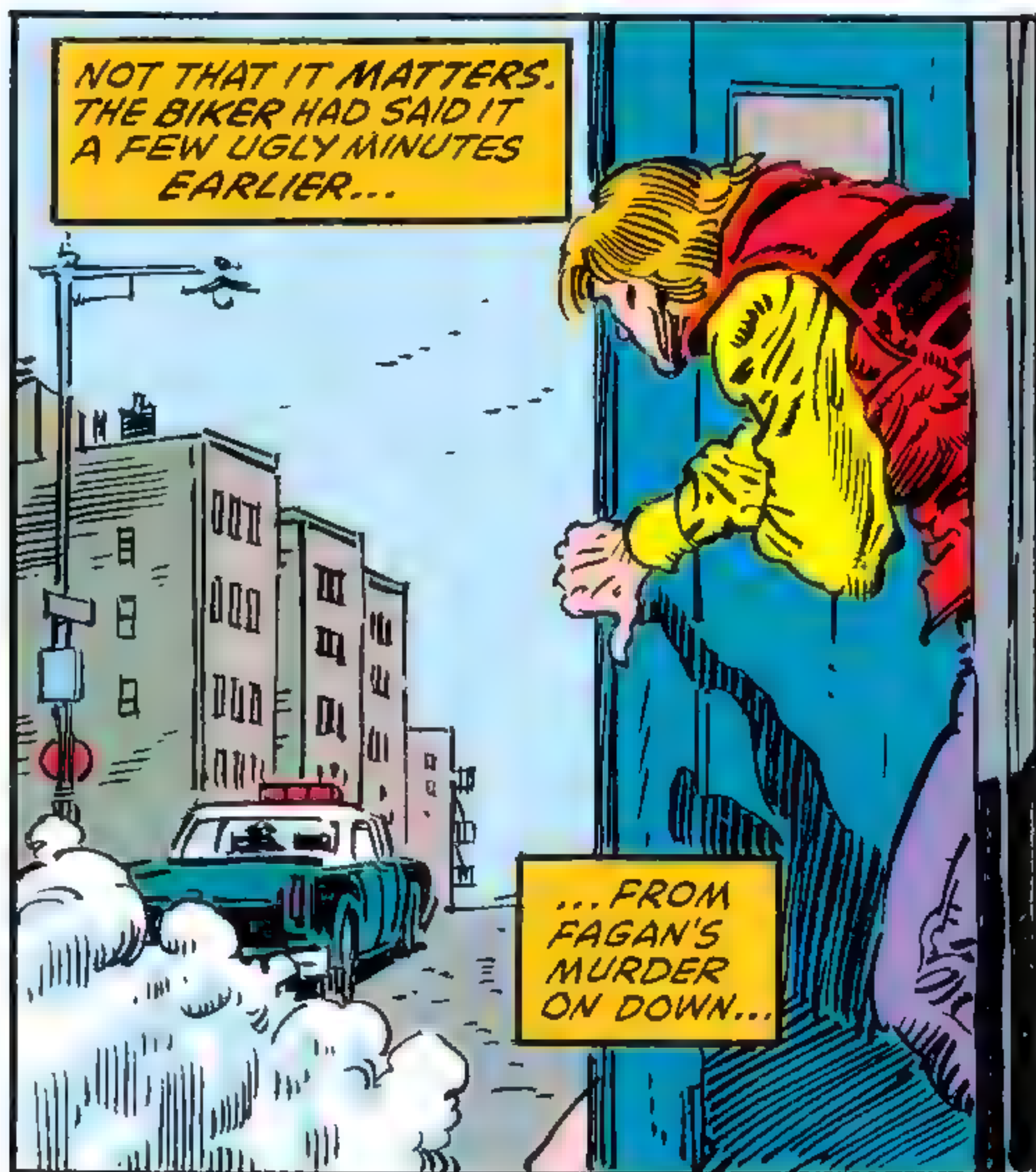


SKREEEE

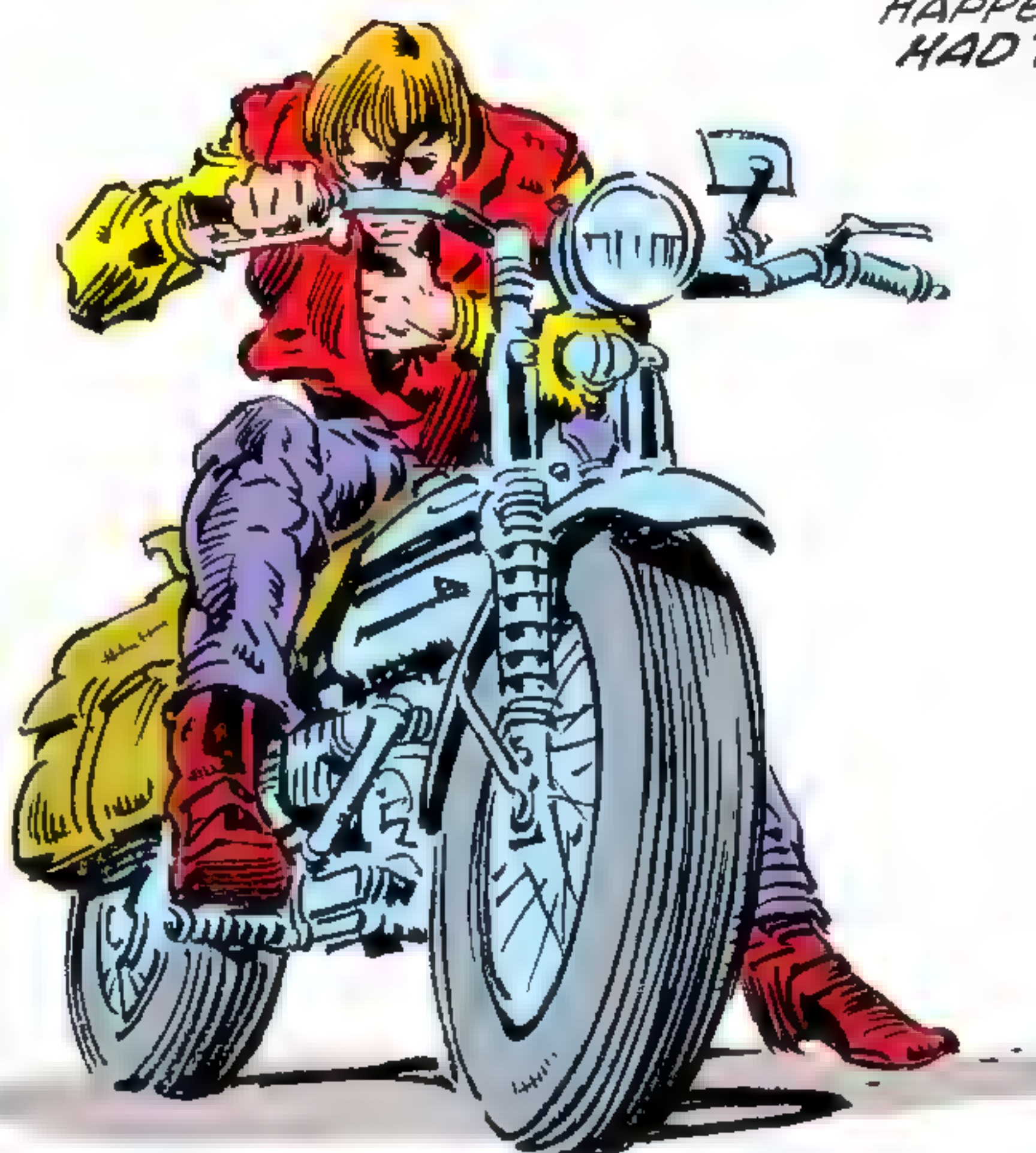


NOT THAT IT MATTERS. THE BIKER HAD SAID IT A FEW UGLY MINUTES EARLIER...

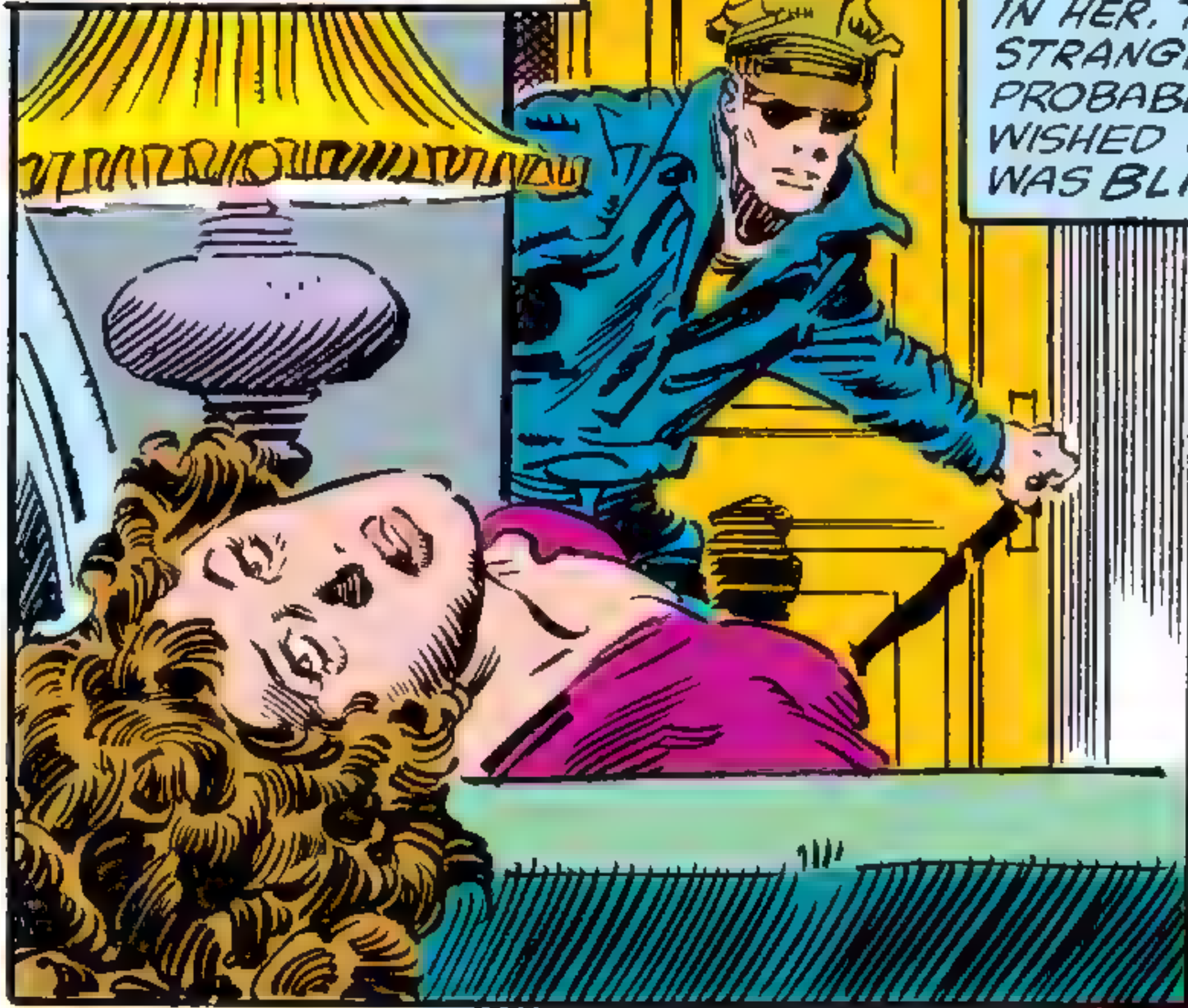
...FROM FAGAN'S MURDER ON DOWN...



...WHAT HAPPENED HAD TO.



THE STRANGER GOT TO COSIE'S FASTER THAN HE HAD A RIGHT. EVEN SO, HE WAS A GOOD HOUR TOO LATE.



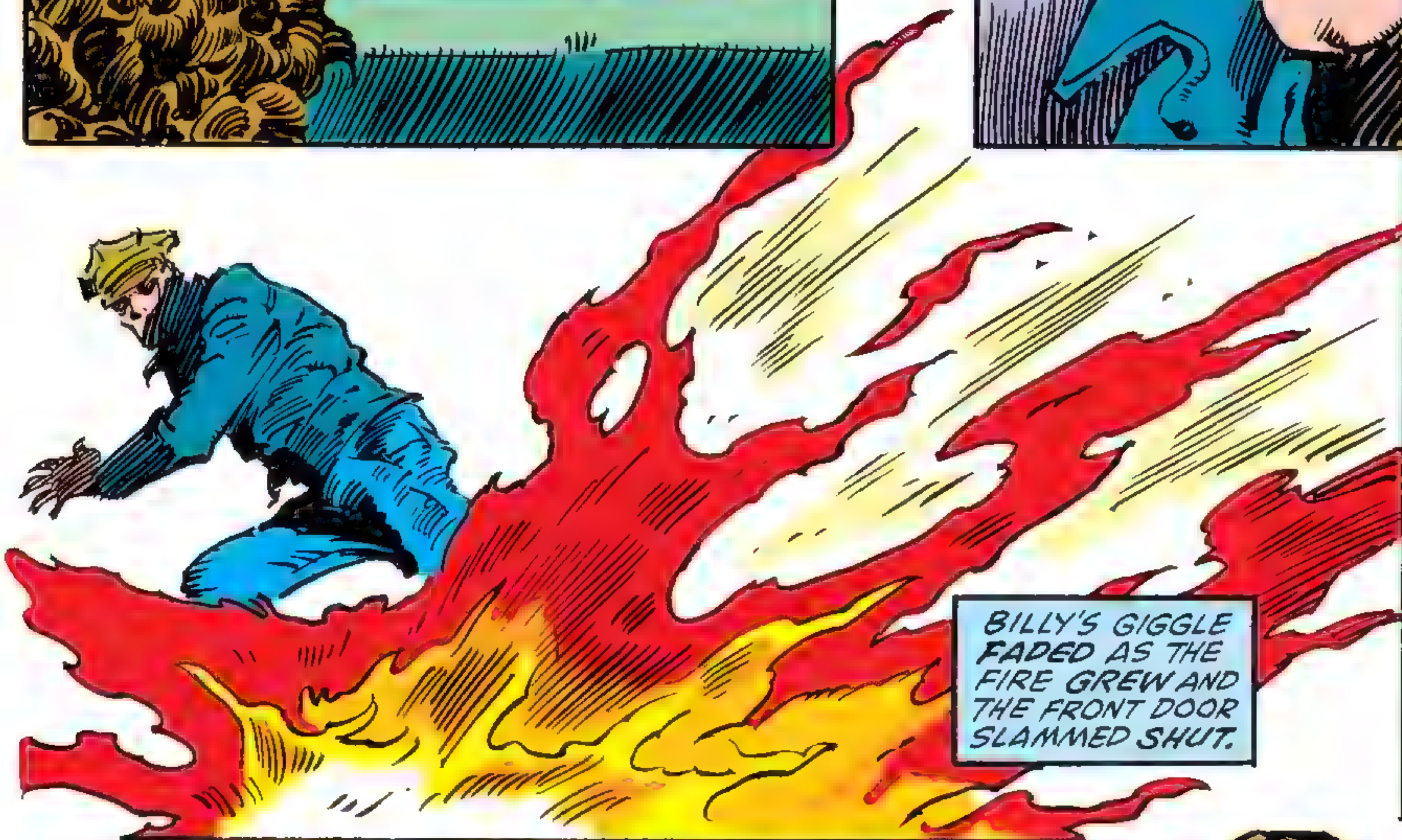
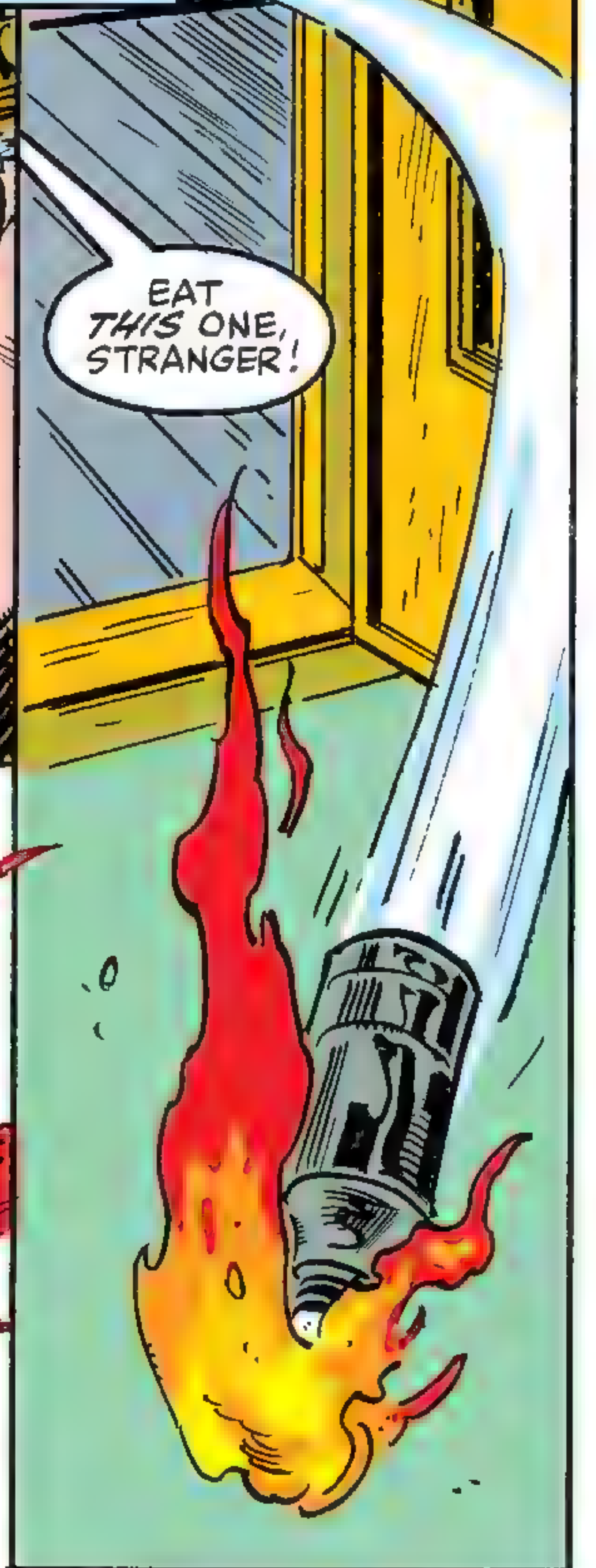
BEAVER HADN'T LEFT ANY WAY FOR THERE TO BE MUCH BLOOD IN HER. THE STRANGER PROBABLY WISHED HE WAS BLIND.

AND IF HE WAS LOOKING TO MOURN HER...

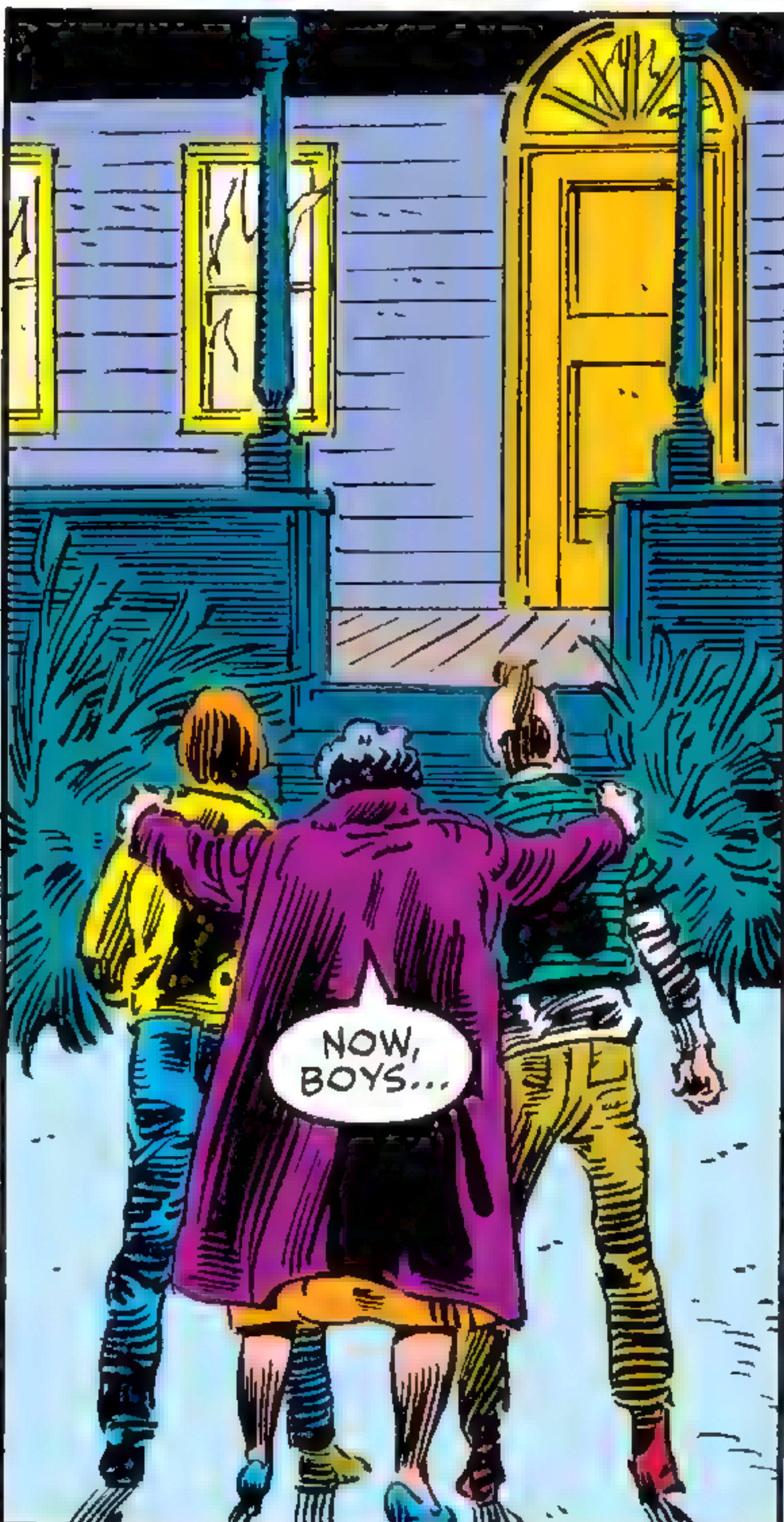
... IT WAS TOO LATE FOR THAT, TOO.



EAT THIS ONE, STRANGER!



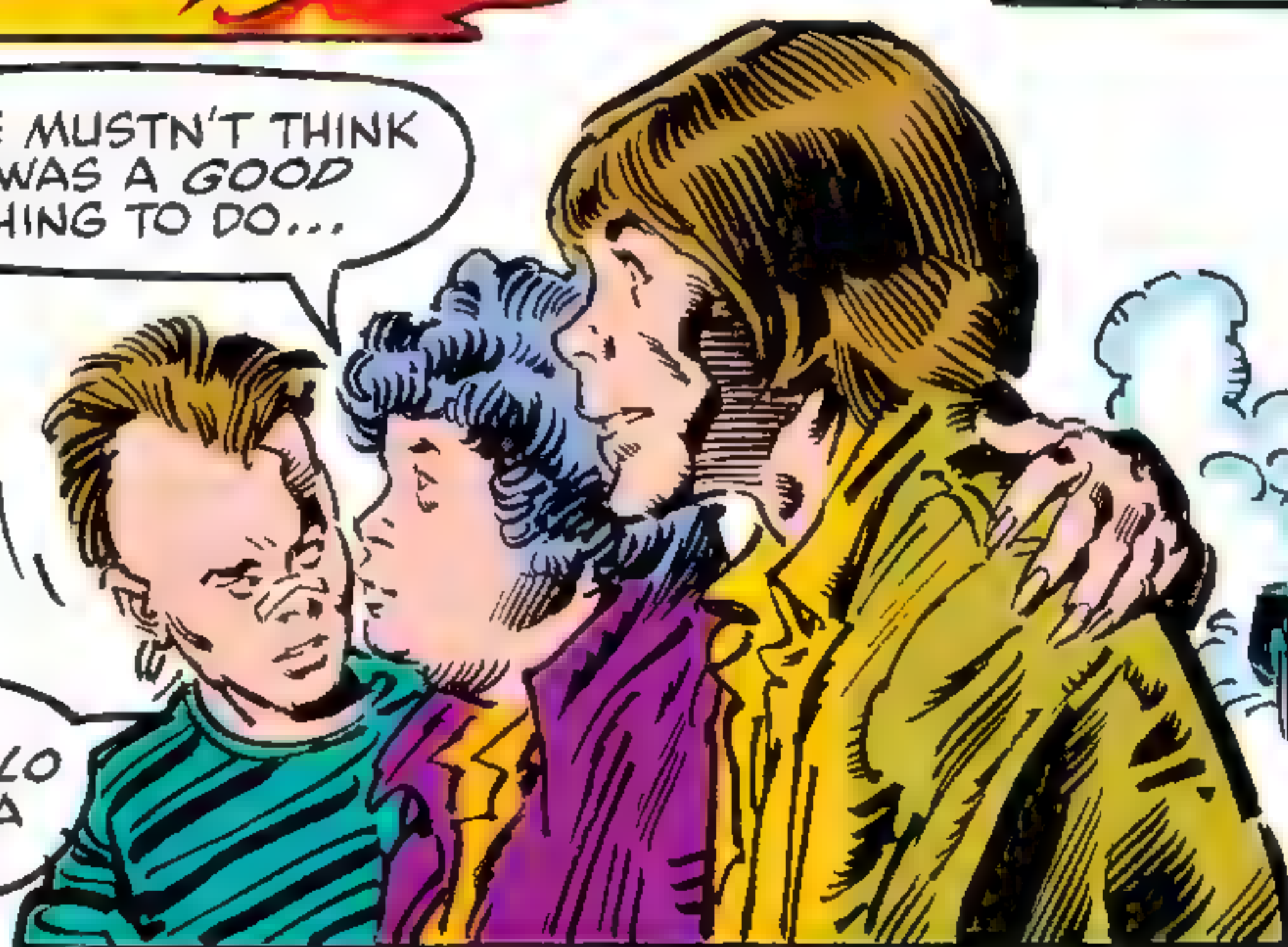
BILLY'S GIGGLE FADED AS THE FIRE GREW AND THE FRONT DOOR SLAMMED SHUT.



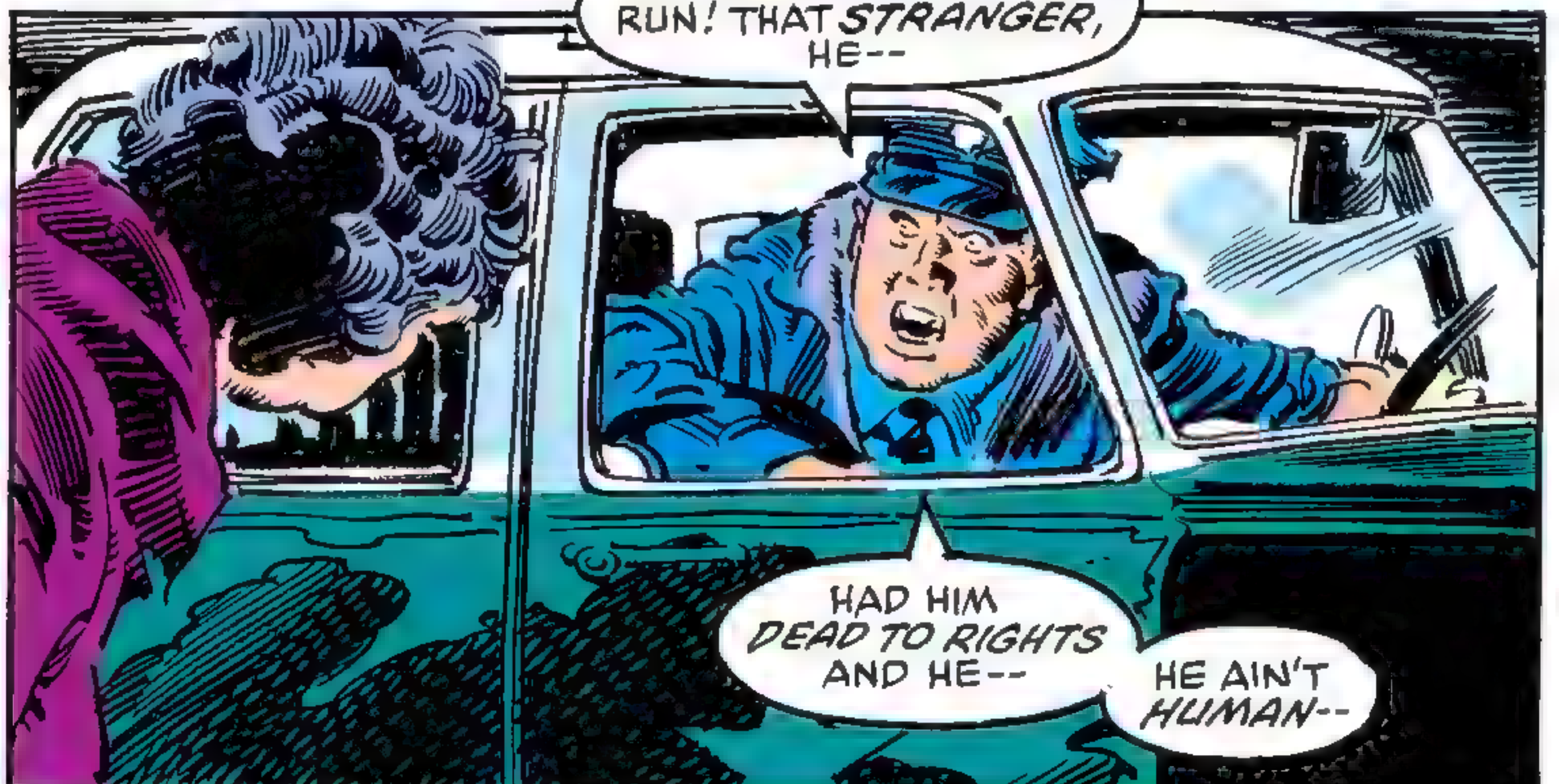
NOW, BOYS...

... WE MUSTN'T THINK THIS WAS A GOOD THING TO DO...

IT'S COSTELLO MOMMA HE--

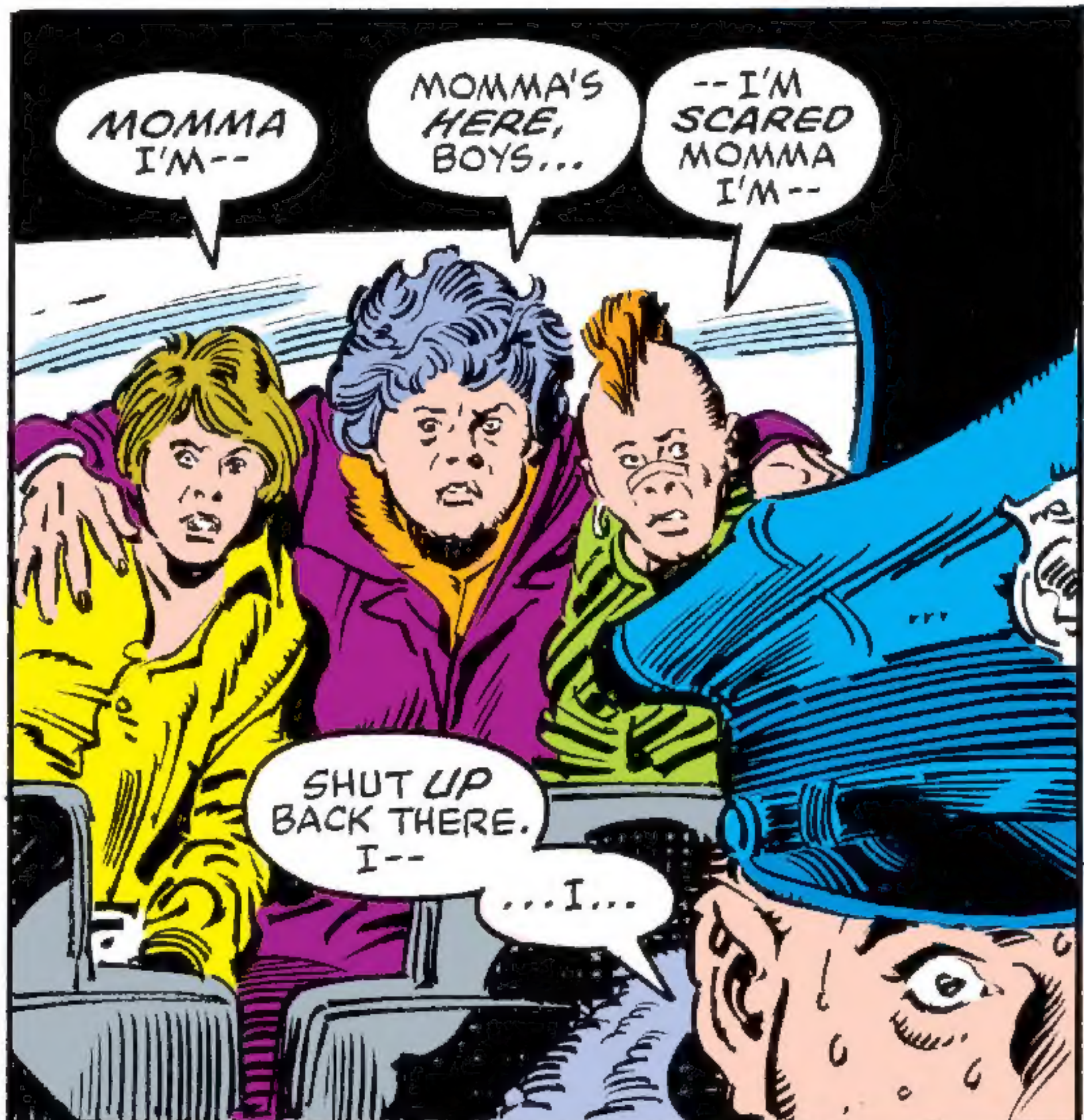
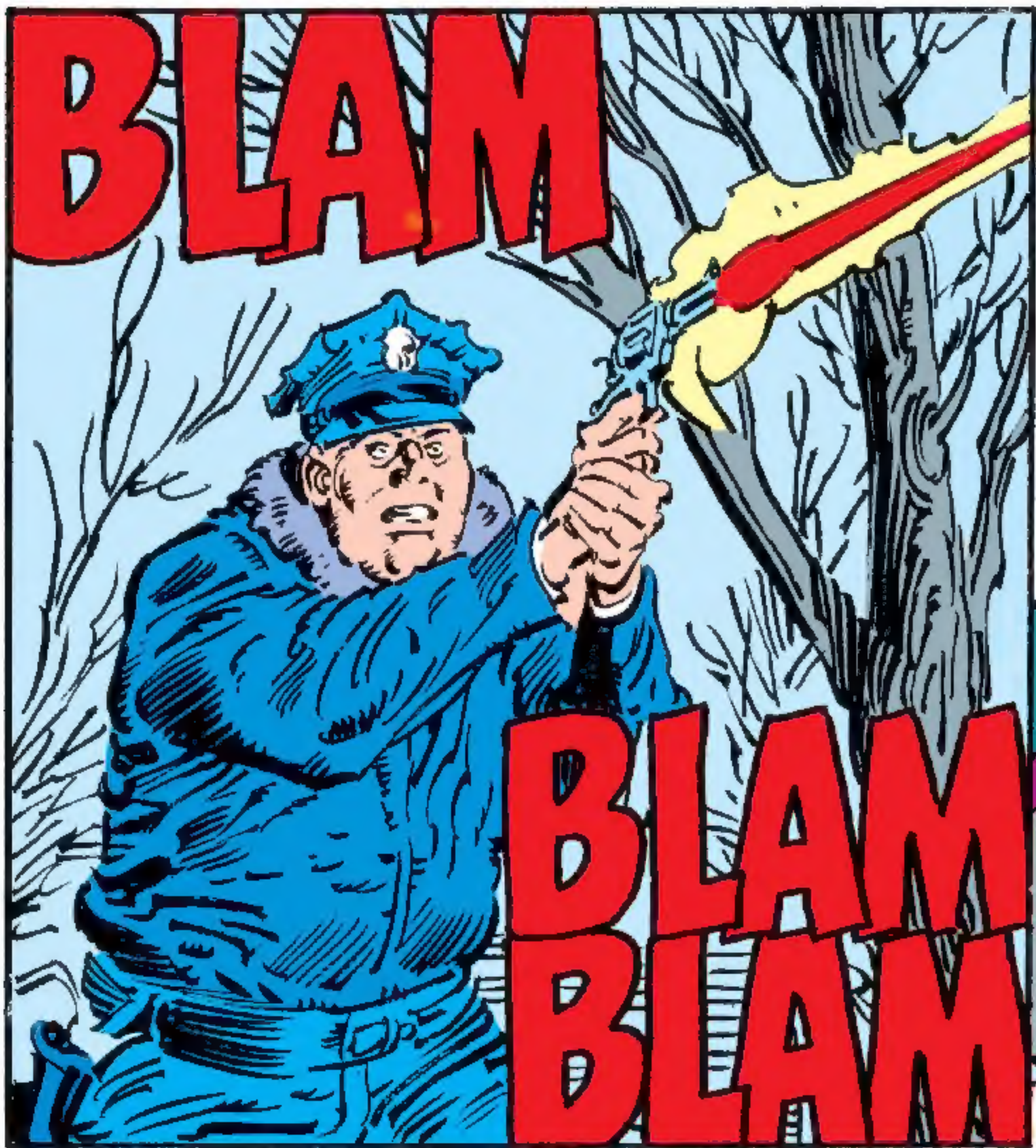
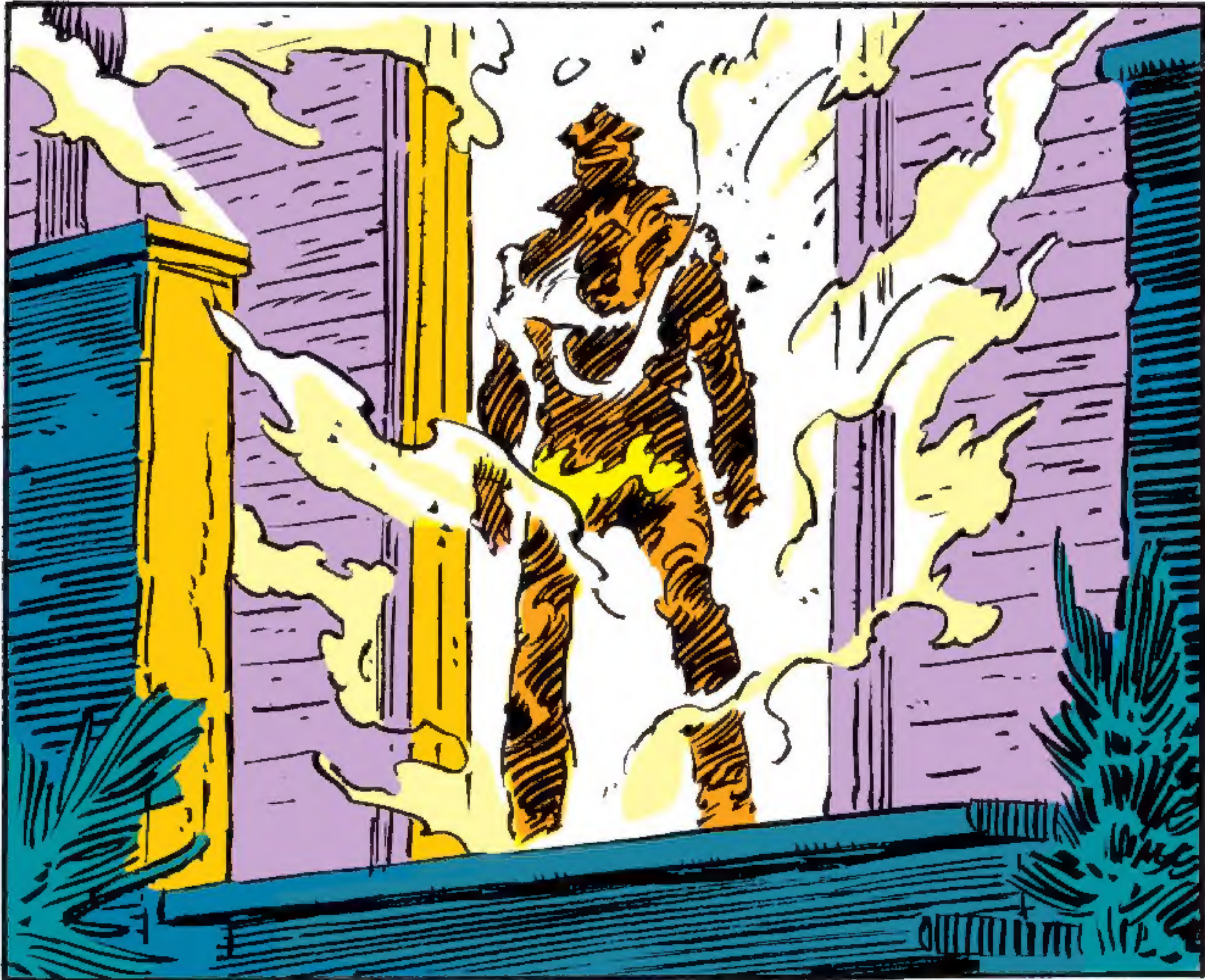


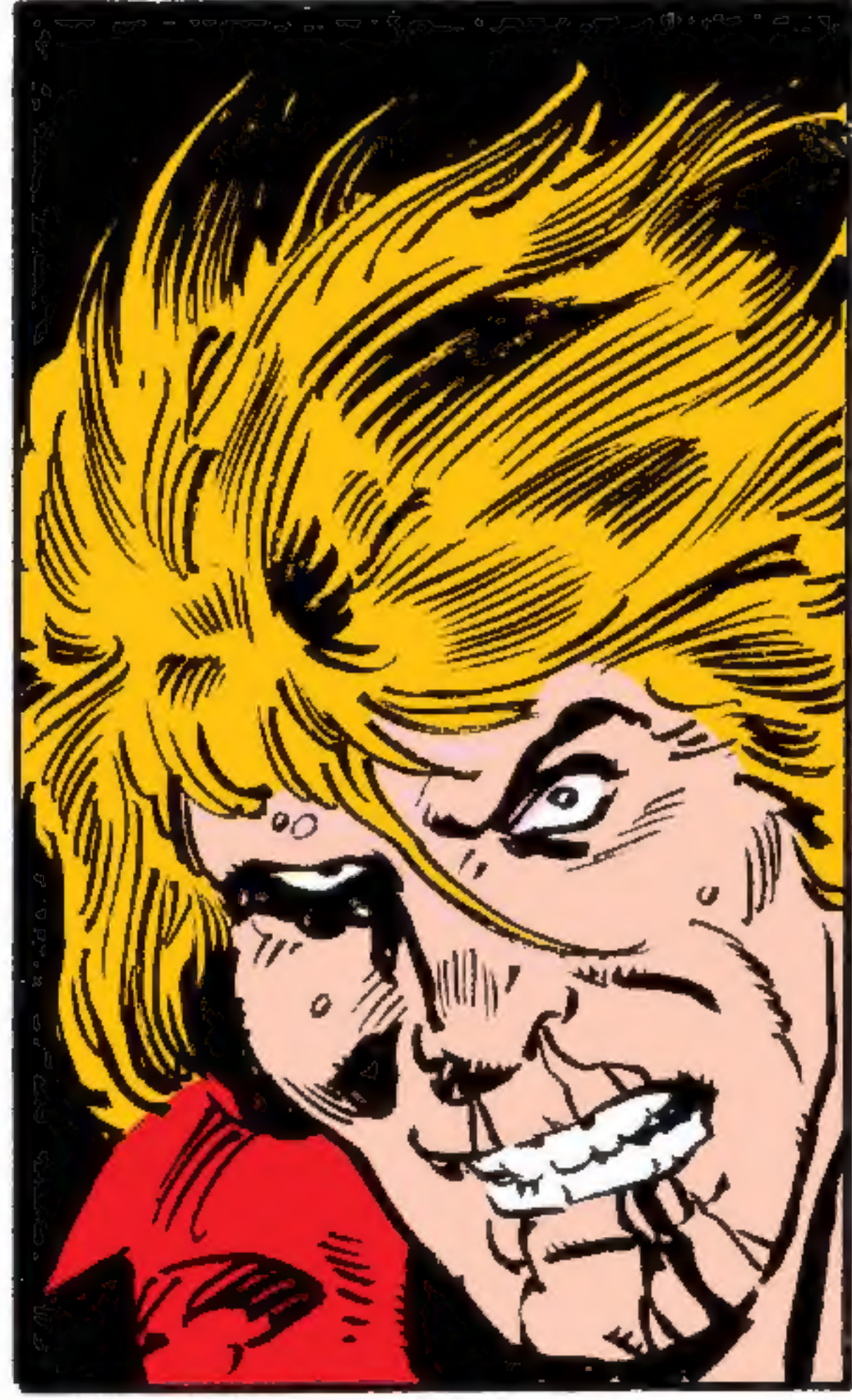
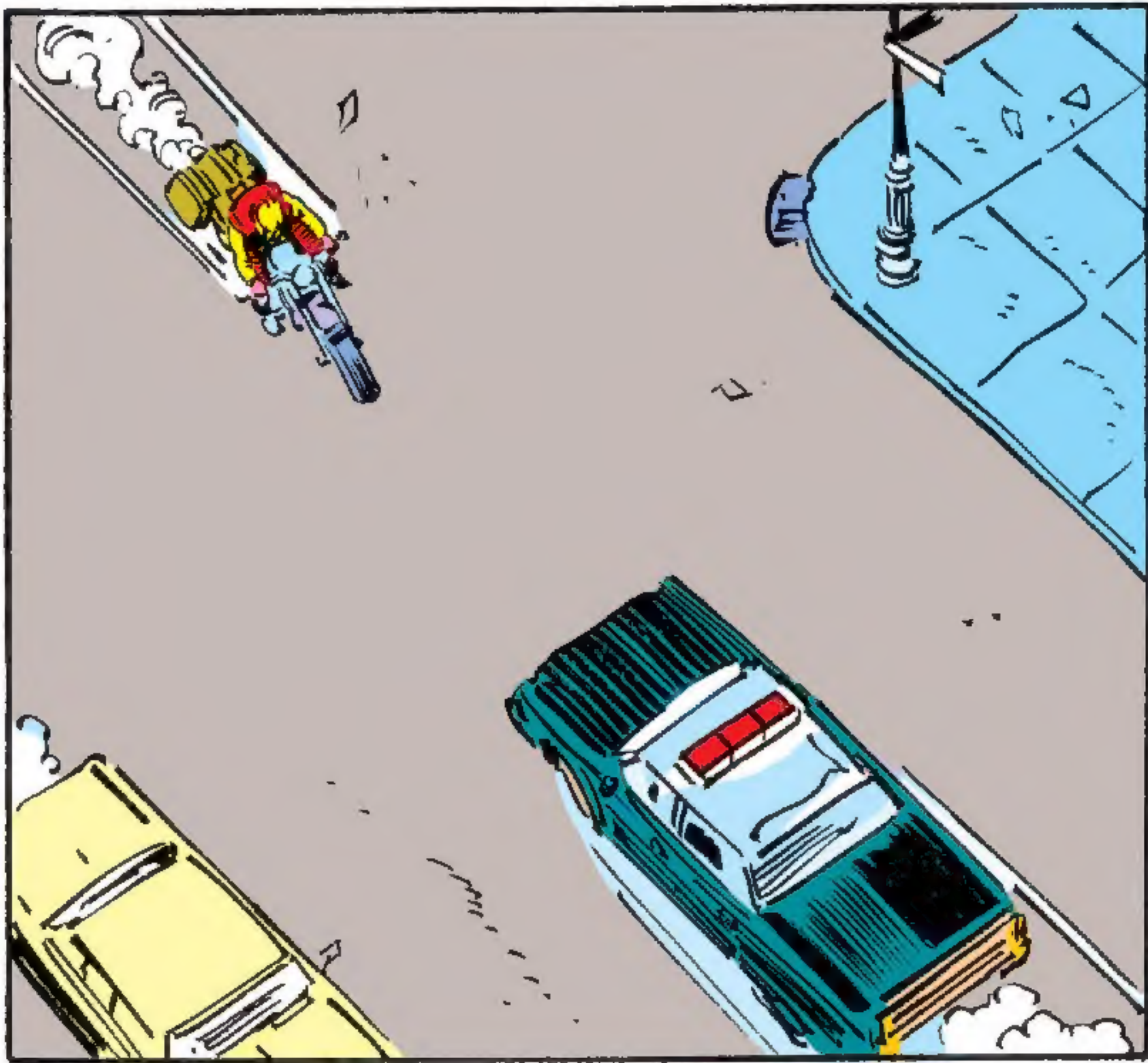
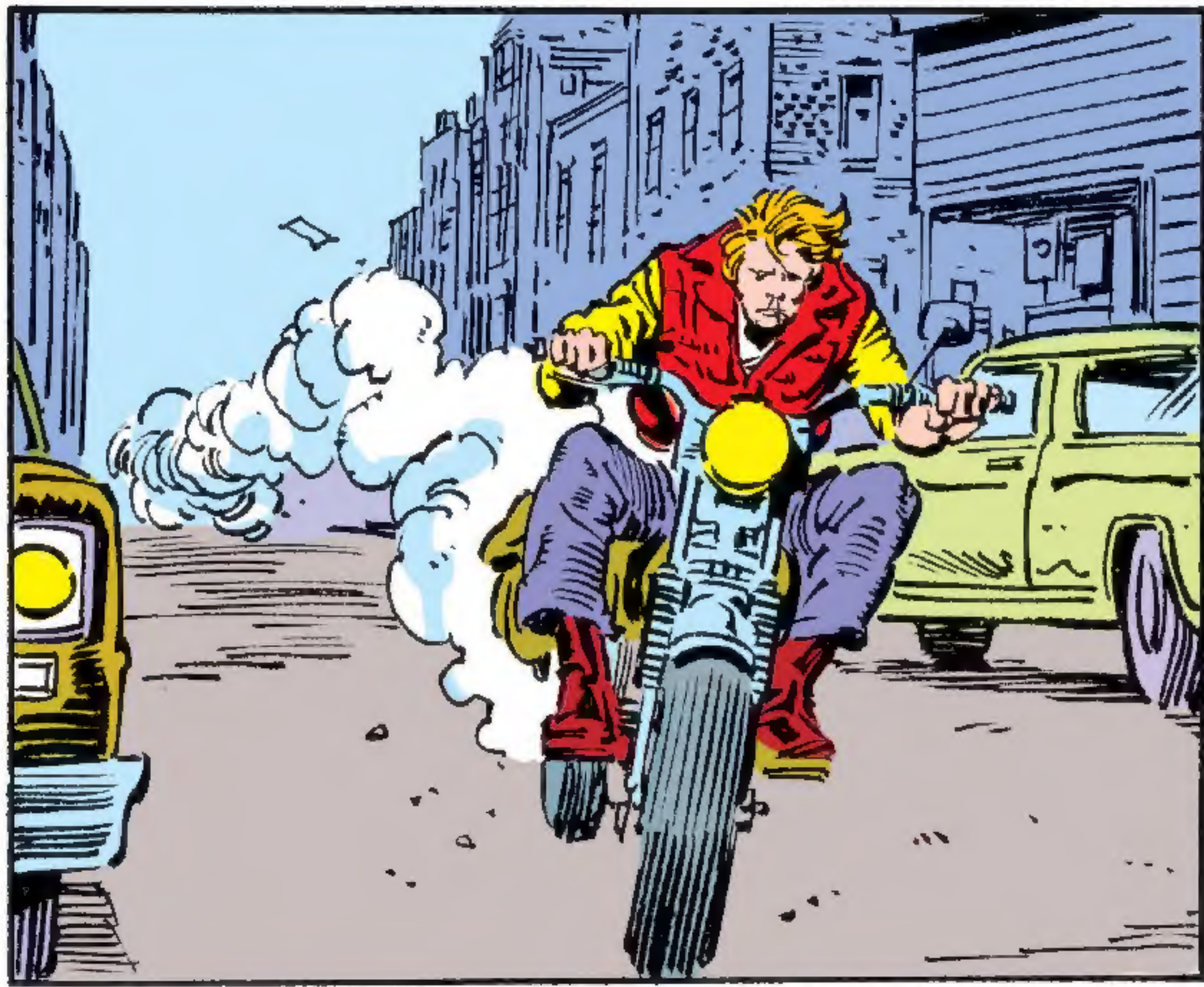
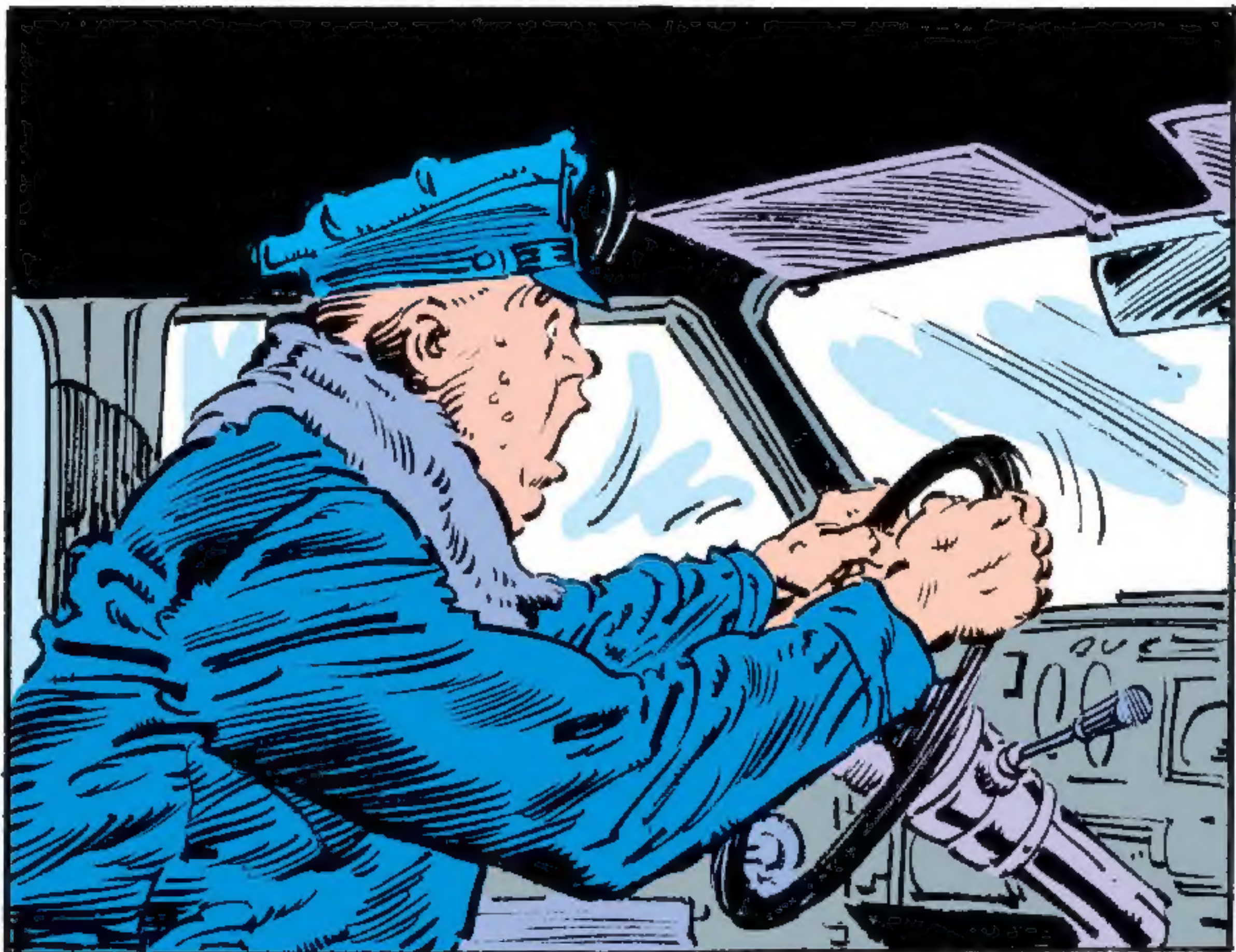
MYRTLE! WE GOTTA RUN! THAT STRANGER, HE--

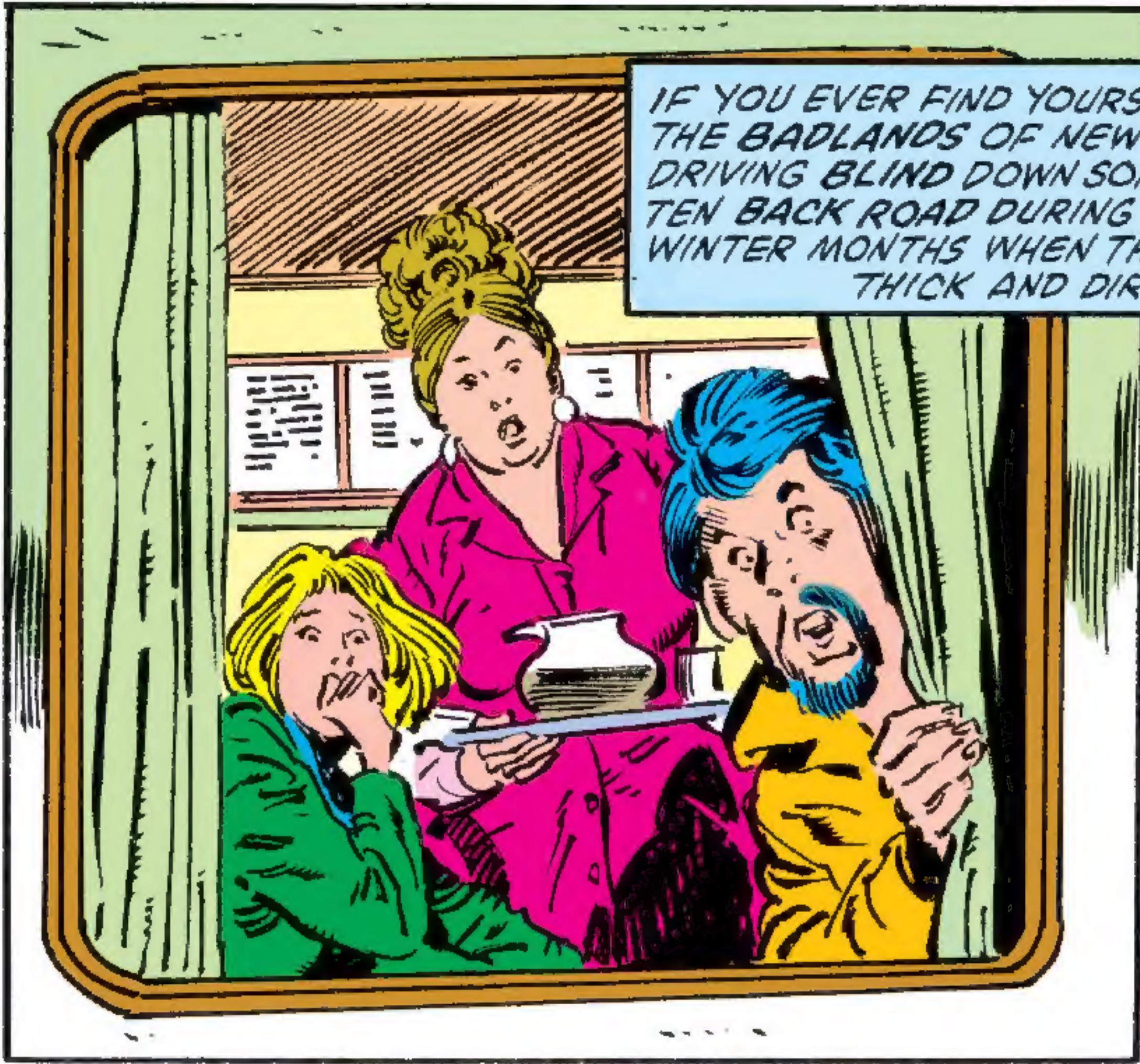


HAD HIM DEAD TO RIGHTS AND HE--

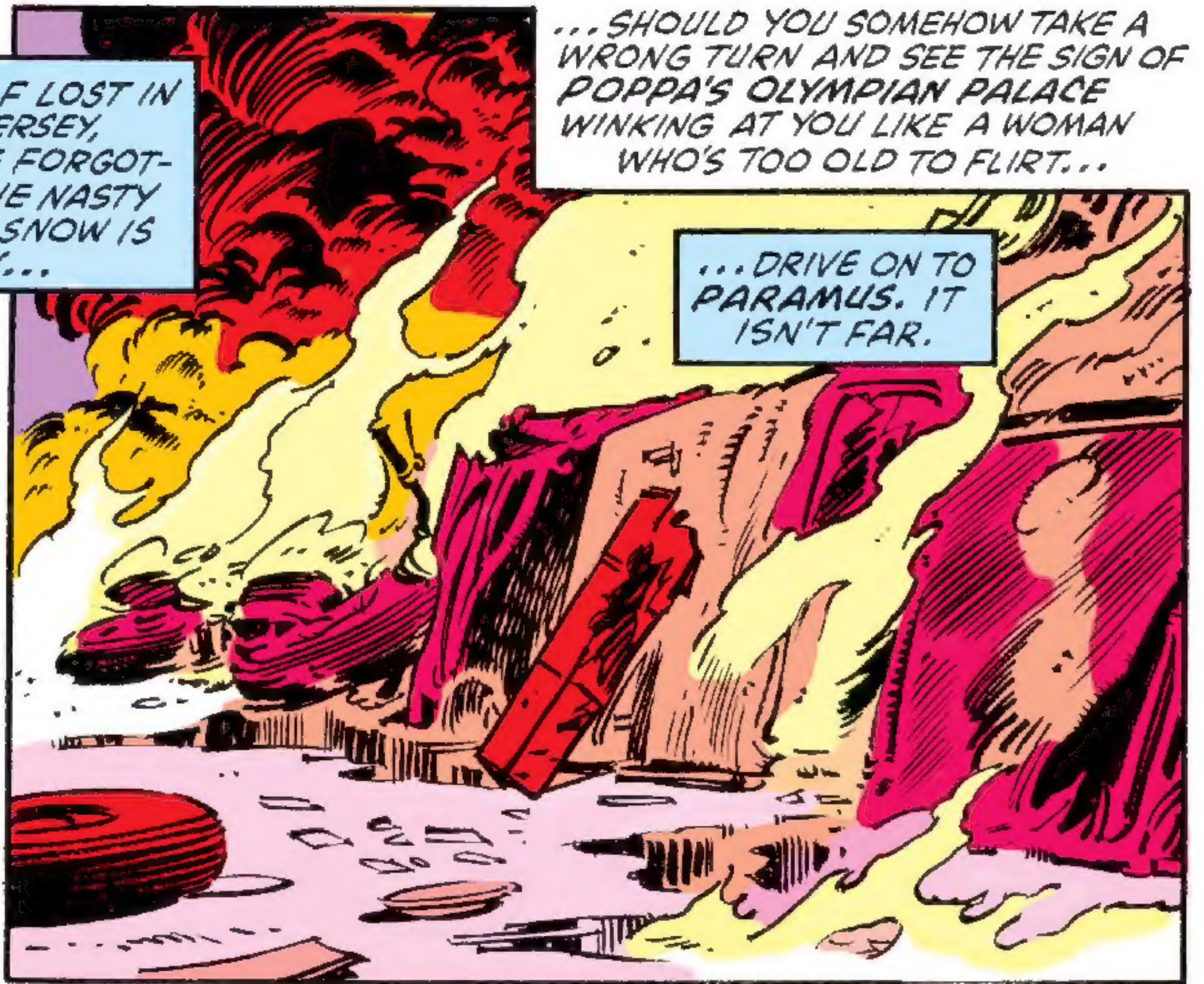
HE AIN'T HUMAN--



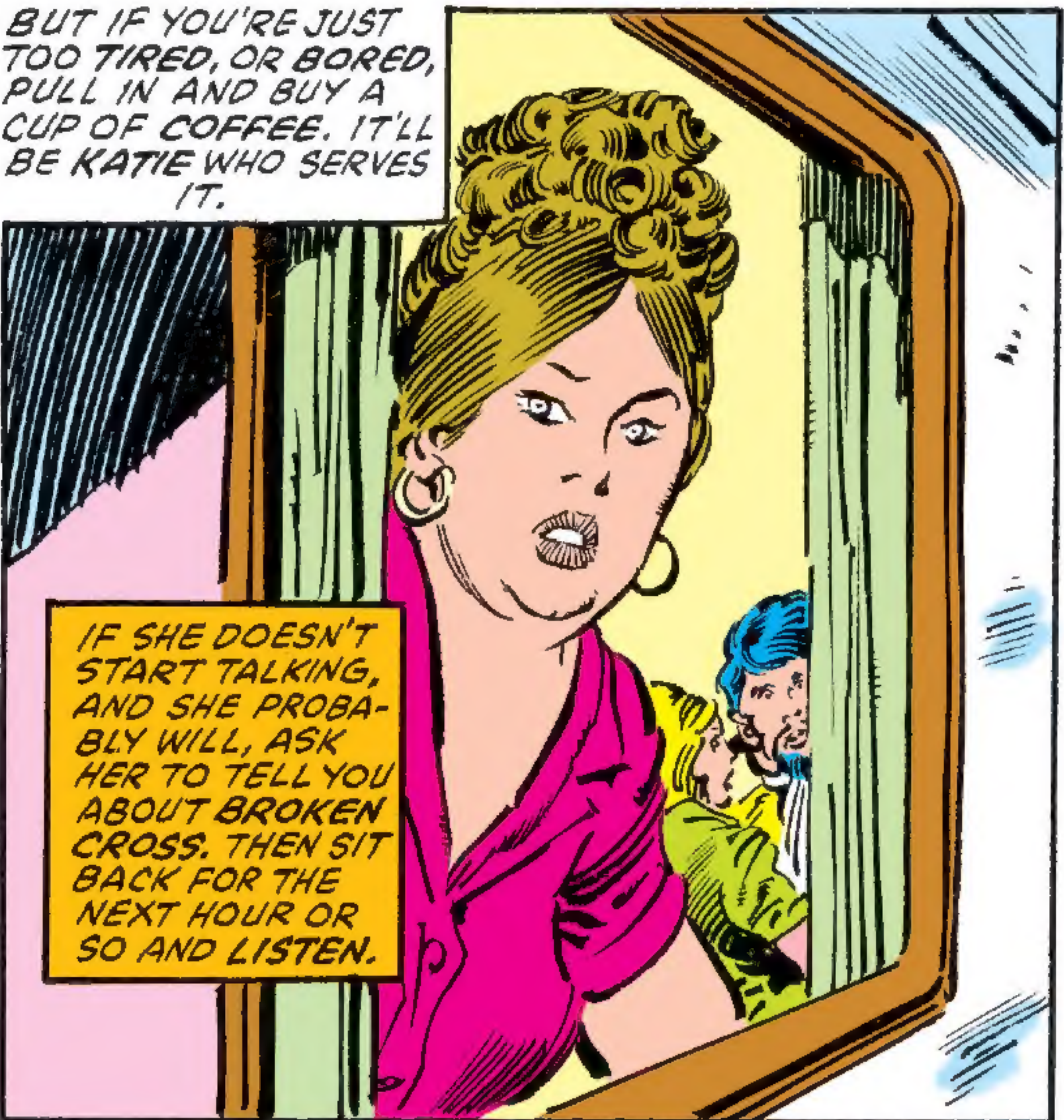




IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF LOST IN THE BADLANDS OF NEW JERSEY, DRIVING BLIND DOWN SOME FORGOTTEN BACK ROAD DURING THE NASTY WINTER MONTHS WHEN THE SNOW IS THICK AND DIRTY...

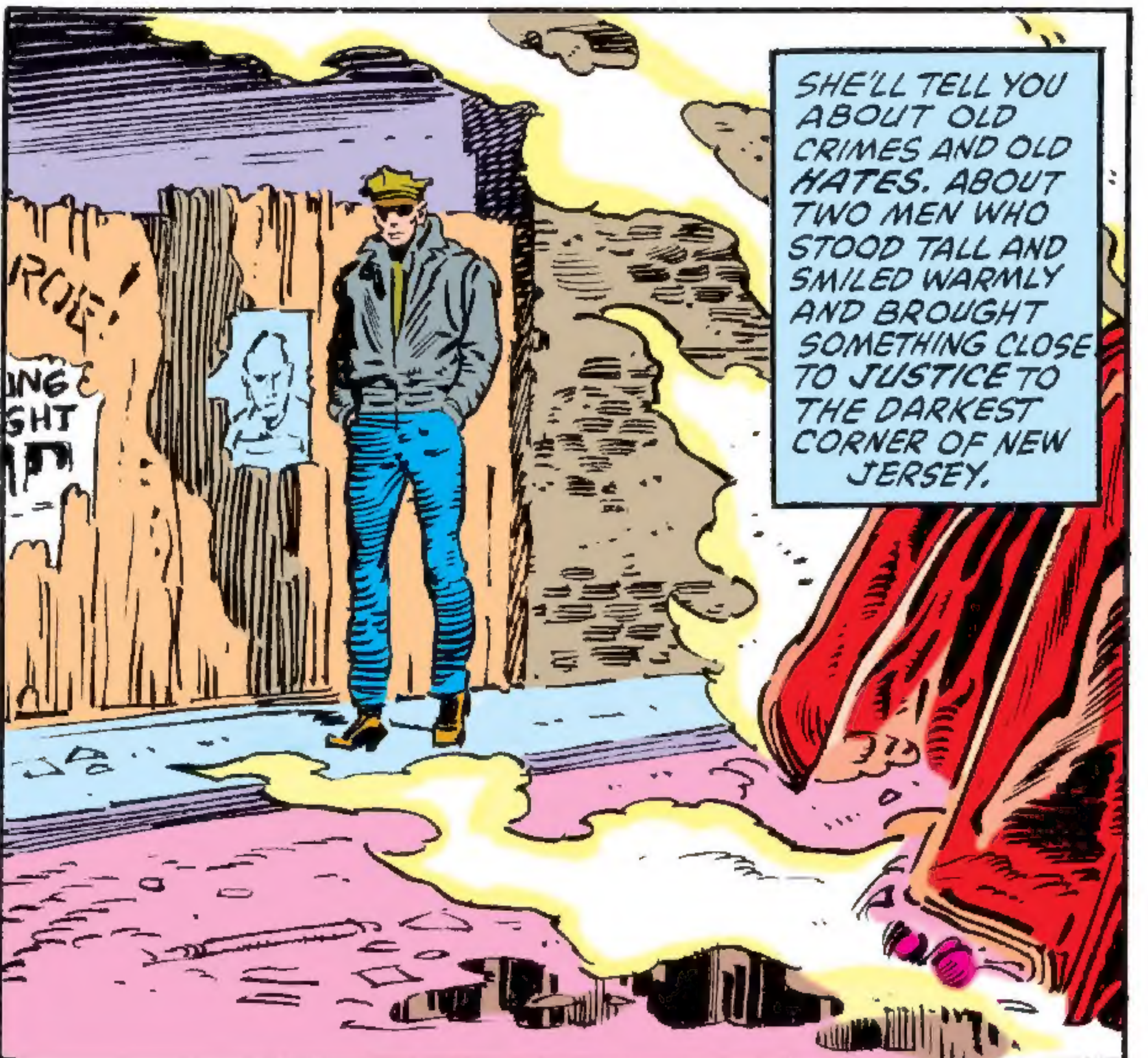


...DRIVE ON TO PARAMUS. IT ISN'T FAR.



BUT IF YOU'RE JUST TOO TIRED, OR BORED, PULL IN AND BUY A CUP OF COFFEE. IT'LL BE KATIE WHO SERVES IT.

IF SHE DOESN'T START TALKING, AND SHE PROBABLY WILL, ASK HER TO TELL YOU ABOUT BROKEN CROSS. THEN SIT BACK FOR THE NEXT HOUR OR SO AND LISTEN.



SHE'LL TELL YOU ABOUT OLD CRIMES AND OLD HATES. ABOUT TWO MEN WHO STOOD TALL AND SMILED WARMLY AND BROUGHT SOMETHING CLOSE TO JUSTICE TO THE DARKEST CORNER OF NEW JERSEY.



IF YOU STAY LONG, THOUGH, SHE'LL PROBABLY START TALKING ABOUT GHOSTS.

SO DON'T.



THE END

